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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

•June 1984 is history, but rather than retire from this column for the summer I may just stick around. Jesse Jackson schmoozes with Fidel Castro. Walter Mondale buys a house in the provinces and drags a gallimaufry of potential vice presidential candidates out there, all carefully chosen on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, and sexual orientation. The country continues to prosper under the most conservative President since Coolidge, and all ritualistic liberals slip ever further into irrationality and bigotry. Now their convention approaches. I may not take my vacation until the fall.

•Swales, winner of two legs of this year's Triple Crown, died as did Lillian Hellman, that lonely feminist inspiration who as a little girl frequently disappeared for days after going off with her chums to partake of a vigorous game of hide-and-seek. So obnoxious was she that once she had duly hidden herself away all of her little friends would exult and solemnly promise not to look for her. Her parents often had difficulty getting the police to look for her. In fact even the senior Hellmans were often glad she was gone, and they would frequently pretend she had gone to visit a sick aunt. Occasionally she actually would visit her sick aunts, all of whom were quite rich and soon much sicker. Naturally such a pest became a leftist malcontent of the Stalinist hue, or a "rebel" as the obituary writers were prone to sigh in their sentimental obsequies. The gringo rebel lived luxuriously on Park Avenue. All her life she lolled in opulence as is characteristic of so many of our rebels. In the 1970s she was seen posing in a $7000 Blackglama fur coat in such radical organs as the *New Yorker*, though her features were not comely. To her last days she remained the obnoxious little girl, her exertions now being focused on paring away the First Amendment rights of her fellow Americans by suing Miss Mary McCarthy who had called her a liar. Miss Hellman died in the jungles of remote Martha's Vineyard. The grateful exit came just nineteen days after the expiry of a similarly endowed Italian progressive, Sr. Enrico Berlinguer, the millionaire leader of Italy's Communist party. He too was a rebel.

•On June 12 Senators Howard Baker and Charles Percy notified President Ronald Reagan that so arctic had U.S.-USSR relations grown that he must palaver with Mr. Konstantin U. Chernenko at the earliest possible opportunity. The following day Mr. Chernenko threw spitballs at the Western leaders' proposal for renewed disarmament talks. In Atlanta, Georgia, Mayor Andrew Young's administration is floundering in one of the most bizarre scandals in the history of urban politics, a scandal linking intolerable political corruption to the local zoo. There are charges that party stalwarts loaned Twinkles the elephant to a traveling circus against his will and while he was in ill-health. It is further alleged that two unfortunate Kodiak bears lost their lives while doing similar service. A lion and a tiger have died under mysterious circumstances, and city workers accidentally poured cement over some hapless prairie dogs' burrows. Now some charge that rabbits have been purchased not for display but for the gustatory pleasures of corrupt officials. The zoo has become a veritable Babylon: suspended by the esteemed American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, and investigated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for possible violations of the Animal Welfare Rights Act. Thus far the Hon. Andy is as clean as a hound's tooth—but, investigators might well ask, where is the rest of the hound?

•In sports news the Soviet Union withdrew from Uniondale, Long Island's International Games for the Disabled. The publicity-conscious Soviets had planned to bring twenty-two blind runners, but then must have calculated how difficult it was going to be to keep these stallions and geldings from lecherous America's peep shows and adult bookstores and concluded that the bad publicity would vitiate all the celebrity of their epic runs. In scenic Khartoum, Sudan, a mob of avid fans turned out for that country's first public flogging of a foreigner since its Moslem government imposed the Prophet's sacred teetotal laws. The floggee was Brother Joseph Manara, an Italian Roman Catholic clergyman who had been nabbed lugging a bottle of whiskey, sixteen bottles of wine, and a case of beer to the Bishop of Wau in southern Sudan. An impressive haul that, which suggests that the Third World bishop could hold his own with practically any member of our National Conference of Catholic Bishops, assuming, of course, that Brother Manara's provisions were solely intended for his excellency's Saturday luncheon. There was a lot of brave feminist oratory at the National Organization for Women's annual meeting in Miami Beach, but it was left to 25-year-old Carolyn M. Matsumoto to make the most eloquent feminist statement of the season when, unbeknownst to her parents or to her shrink, she crawled into the family dishwasher, turned it on, and became the first American ever to commit suicide in a dishwasher.

•Across America the wowser impulse grows. In the State of New York the legislature comes ever closer to passing a mandatory seat belt law for the criminally minded automobile passenger. The U.S. Senate passed legislation aimed at establishing a nationwide minimum drinking age, and now there is a move afoot to have warning labels placed on every Bible sold in the Republic. According to Mrs. Anne Gaylor of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, unparalleled calamity and even personal injury have resulted from reading the Bible, and she has urged the Pennsylvania Bureau of Consumer Protection to label Bibles with the admonition: "WARNING! Literal belief in this book may endanger your life and health." "We are dealing with a uniquely dangerous book filled with lethal teachings," this aroused consumer warns. A Kentucky railroad worker claiming that bird droppings are impairing his health has sued the Seaboard System Railroad for $850,000, and soon consumer advocates may be casting their woeful glances toward professional baseball, for a San Francisco Giants fan has fallen to his death from the upper deck of Candlestick Park while shouting obscenities at an offending player.

•Oceans of fruit juice and warm milk flowed at the Sheraton Washington hotel at the end of June when the Ninth National Conference on Men and Masculinity convened to meditate on the theme "Men Working, Men Playing, Men at Peace." Was Mr. Joseph Fichera there? He is the Smith, Barney, Harris Upham & Company vice president who became visibly upset on the New York-to-Washington shuttle upon being asked to vacate seats reserved for our UN ambassador. In fact he created such a row that the fierce Mrs. Kirkpatrick skipped the

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flight entirely. Many of the Republic's psychiatric clinics were emptied at the end of the month as thousands of 1960s flower children journeyed to Likely, California for the thirteenth annual "family reunion" of American hippies. In Monroe County, Indiana, members of a group called Citizens for Clean Air and Water may be in hot water. That frightening display they set up in the Monroe County Public Library to illustrate the perils of PCBs ended up contaminating the entire building, and now the patheticoes are facing possible prosecution. Finally, all charges have been dropped against that Midwestern journalism dean who was arrested last month for masturbating in front of a urinal in a public comfort station and who then broke his right hand in a scuffle with police. His indelicate act was reputedly undertaken on doctor's orders. Apparently he was taking the cure. *—RET*

CORRESPONDENCE

Guatemalan Watch

Rather than visiting only model villages while in Guatemala, Mary Ball Martínez ("Clerical Materialism in Mexico's Southeast," *TAS,* April 1984) might have spent some time visiting the many places where what she calls "horror fiction" has actually been documented. She can praise the Guatemalan government's treatment of the Indian population all she likes, but the facts as determined by other investigators are quite different. In several reports of unusual sharpness, Amnesty International has condemned the Guatemalan government's "attempt to control opposition, both violent and non-violent, through the widespread use of torture and the killing of large numbers of rural noncombatant civilians including young children . . . " Not only has the Organization of American States cited the "alarming climate of violence either instigated or tolerated by the government," but even such a less than notorious leftist as Jeane Kirkpatrick has expressed dismay at the horrors being perpetrated in Guatemala. The article by Ms. Martínez reads like a mirror image of Henry Wallace's report on his visit to the Gulag Archipelago.

—Robert Kent
Schley, Virginia

Mary Ball Martínez replies:

I have yet to visit a model village. Referred to in the article is Nenton, a town which was totally abandoned in January 1982. The day I stopped there last summer a dozen families had just returned from self-imposed exile in Mexico. I asked them why they had all run away. What were they afraid of?

"The subversives, Señora. We knew them. One night they came to Nenton. First they burned down our village hall, then they made us men line up in the street and said we had to join them. When we didn't agree to that they killed our Mayor and his helper. Then the Army came. But a year after that word got around one night that the soldiers were moving out. And so our whole village began to pack up, too. Lately in Mexico we heard the Army had beaten the subversives all over the country, so we decided to come back."

I had been nearly as credulous as Mr. Kent over stories the world was getting about Guatemala until I went down to see for myself. Avoiding the usual journalists' airport Sheraton press conference routine, I rode dilapidated buses into the hinterland to talk to country people most affected by the long struggle. The trip was a shocker. One foreign report after another proved to be false.

Rarely has a defamation campaign been as effective as the one the Left has waged against Guatemala. It climaxed in the late fall of 1982 when, after twenty years in the field, the rebels, under Cuban-trained leadership, suddenly found themselves bereft of that essential base for guerrilla warfare, namely peasant support.

A particularly skillful counter-insurgency campaign had been launched at the beginning of summer, and in conjunction with it, something new in Central America—a generous "reach-out" to peasants who had willingly or unwillingly gotten involved with subversion. Within six months, half the time projected, pacification had been virtually achieved. Stunned by unexpected defeat, rebel leaders, now over the border in Mexico, raged impotently and their cries were snatched up and broadcast to the world by the ever Left-leaning international media.

Only now is some truth beginning to emerge. In the *Wall Street Journal* for April 30, David Asman reviews the recently released report on Guatemala by the United Nations Human Rights Commission, which effectively lays to rest most of the wild accusations of Amnesty International and that noisy little committee which calls itself Americas Watch.

Thoughts on Poverty

I would like to make a comment about Tom Bethell's "Thoughts on Poverty" from the June 1984 issue. I have been a reader of *The American Spectator* for about six years now, and have never written a letter to the paper. But, for whatever it's worth, we in the office of the United States Executive Director at the Inter-American Development Bank do not fall into the category Mr. Bethell estimates "50 percent of those employed by the World Bank and IMF" do. That is, we know that development in Latin America must go hand-in-hand with security and democracy. We never underestimate the power of the market as an engine for development, and this office is doing its best to preserve integrity and long-term results in the loan projects of the IDB.

—Christopher C. Sundseth
Special Assistant to the
U.S. Executive Director
Inter-American Development Bank
Washington, D.C.

Tom Bethell has seized on an important, emerging cliché of the Hive when he notes the recent buzzing that "poverty, not Communism," is the problem in Central America.

But we must not fail to note that an equal, perhaps larger segment of the Hive now more or less admits that Communism is bad ("of course the Russians are bad guys") but suggests a pragmatic difference over how to deal with it ("the issue is how we stop insurgencies," as Art Schlesinger lectured Bill Buckley on a recent "Nightline").

Does this suggest a split in the ranks of the Left? Only the one Mr. Bethell draws out in a different way: The hard Left renounces any opposition to Communism at all, whereas liberals are allowed to oppose Communism rhetorically provided—and this is a biggie—that every time doing something pragmatic to combat Communism is proposed, the liberal is against it:

"It's not that I love Moscow any more than my friends on the right do," the well-credentialed liberal argues. "But I don't think that sanction/military aid/covert action/Voice of America broadcasts/military intervention are the way to oppose it. I would favor an approach which places more emphasis on negotiations/economic aid [read 'subsidies for socialism' here]/expanding cultural links." And so on.

An important and emerging task for conservatives, then, is to expose the superficially ad hoc, pragmatic rhetoric of the Left for what it is: a design, in which any sort of action unfavorable to Moscow is said not to work. Alas, the Left has proved expert at co-opting various segments of our ranks on individual questions. Thus *National Review* has nothing critical to say about Reagan Administration dealings with the IMF; businessmen support subsidies to the East bloc under the rhetoric of "free trade"; and the Gipper himself orders the CIA to finance every Salvadoran candidate but the one who supports Reaganomics, Roberto d'Aubuisson. The point of mentioning such specific groups is not to single them out, but to alert us all to put wax in our ears every time the siren's call of "maintaining the moral high ground" drifts toward the ship.

Is this another way of saying that we must "clean up our own house" before we "criticize others," another familiar tune? No, it's only intended as an elaboration on the insights into political manners already developed in these pages by Messrs. Bethell and Sobran and other apiarists.

—Gregory A. Fossedal
Editorial Page Writer
The Wall Street Journal
New York, New York

Jesse and the Jews

I must write in regard to William Tucker's dishonest and slanted assessment of the "fall-out" between Jesse Jackson and the Jews ("Jesse Jackson: The Great Man's Populism," *TAS,* May 1984). I take strong exception to Tucker's statement that "the truth is the Jews have probably been more solicitous of the cause of blacks than any other ethnic group in America, but the patronage has probably been based on a tacit understanding that blacks will return this support on the problems in the Middle East." Tucker's use of the words "solicitous" and "patronage" tells us more about his motives than perhaps he'd want known.

The real truth is most Jews like myself, fourteen at the time Tucker went to Mississippi, championed civil rights because of a strong identifica-

(*continued on page 45*)

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EDITORIALS

FRENCH OPPOSITION

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Paris—Jacques Chirac works in a building that is monumental: gilded ceilings, marbled interiors, doors tall enough to dwarf an NBA center, carpets and tapestries of Lucullan splendor. This is his Paris office. He is the city's mayor, and the man most likely at this point to succeed François Mitterrand as president of France when that woebegone relic passes from the Gallic scene. Poor M. Mitterrand. He is now the Jimmy Carter of his country, a man whom the gods in their ribaldry brought to power though his beliefs were from another age. Touchingly and futilely M. Mitterrand has applied his obsolete wisdom to France and now its sickly economy is at one with the Carter economy.

Chirac is tall and suave, immaculately attired but apologetic—though his English is as perfectly accented as Walter Cronkite's, his vocabulary is limited. Actually he has no need to apologize. Few U.S. politicos and no U.S. disc jockey speaks English with finer diction; as for his limited vocabulary, neither he nor any other member of the growing faction opposing the government needs a plenitude of words to convey to the visiting gringo the French opposition's view of the world. The opposition is concerned about the economy, the government's leftist-inspired encroachments on personal freedom, and that large and unfriendly empire to the east, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Seated midst the splendors of his office M. Chirac soberly points out that the French Socialists came to office promising too much. The France they found themselves governing was not a country of abused and impoverished workers but one of the most prosperous and secure countries in the world. This the yahoo Left did not recognize as they rolled in from the provinces. To a capital where Marxism had already lost the intellectual struggle—a development that I have been noting in this column since the late 1970s—and where capitalism was full of vitality came Socialists lost in antique Marxist abstractions and applying their ruinous nostrums come what may.

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

When Chirac speaks of what his policies might be one is reminded of that genial fellow who works in a less ornate office on Washington, D.C.'s Pennsylvania Avenue. Chirac favors less regulation, lower taxes, more individual freedom, Pershing II and cruise missiles. He is not for paring down military budgets. To the contrary he believes in the danger presented by Soviet SS-20s.

Americans who believe that Ronald Reagan has exaggerated the danger presented to the West by the Soviet arms buildup of the 1970s will not find themselves very popular in France today. Politicos both left and right are with Reagan. The French climate of opinion has swung far from the days of Gaullist détente with the East. Yves Montand is a dramatic example.

Once a proud fellow traveler he now speaks out tirelessly and eloquently against his erstwhile friends in the Kremlin. Montand is a large likable man, a French movie star and singer of international repute. After spending a couple of hours with him one comes away reminded once again of a truth that is very hard for American liberals to accept, to wit: The average Frenchman is profoundly anti-Communist, and for the best reasons.

Montand speaks animatedly of the need to "save democracy even with its corruptions." It is the system of "freedom and peace." Communism is democracy's mortal enemy. Ronald Reagan is "right" in Central America. Toward the Soviets "he must be firm." Like so many other Frenchmen today Montand sounds like the anti-Communists of old, and then just as I depart his company I am tipped off as to why he and Chirac and so many others are so alarmed about the condition of their freedoms. "To live," he laments with moving sincerity, "under occupation is terrible." Occupation!□

D-DAY BOSH

We reflect on the past much more easily than we reflect on the present, for when the past is returned to us its anxieties merely edify or amuse. They do not sting as the anxieties of the present always do. Thus last month when we reflected on D-Day we did so comfortably, and why not? The entertainers who brought it all back to us brought it back in such a way as to edify and to amuse and to reinforce the fatuities of the present moment. World War II's relevance to our times was neatly kept from view.

Thus we heard that World War II was a war that pitted a united America against a common enemy. It was, as one commentator said, "a consensus war," which is an inaccurate statement but a statement that dovetails nicely with the present moment's fatuous notion that only after Americans have arrived at a consensus can they fight a war.

Actually a sizable body of opinion opposed American entry into what became World War II. In Congress the extension of the draft passed by only one vote in 1941, the opposition being supported by no less renowned a figure than Robert A. Taft. Had Hitler not gratuitously declared war on us after Pearl Harbor FDR would have had an even more difficult time getting our troops to Normandy, and as it was, 1930s isolationism forced him to follow an unedifyingly devious course just to prepare us for the inevitable. A wide range of interests wanted to keep us free of European entanglements throughout the 1930s, and even in the 1940s millions of Americans doubted the need for a large American war machine or for American involvement abroad.

The Russians hooted at our com-

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memorations last month, reiterating their wartime charge that we should have invaded Europe two years earlier. They were lucky that we were there at all. Many Americans who opposed FDR's interventionist policies based their opposition on America's idealistic disdain for European power politics, a case that was only strengthened by the Soviet Union's 1939 pact with the Nazis. After the signing of that pact the Nazis invaded helpless Poland from the west, and Russia gluttonously gobbled up Poland from the east. World War II had begun. No, I do not think that the nation that conspired with Hitler can shame us for not having invaded Normandy sooner.

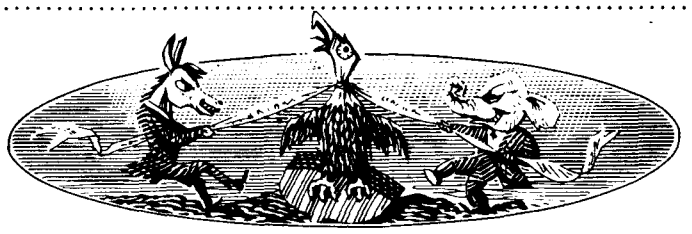
The past brought to us last month is a past strewn with the confused ideas of the present. Time and again we heard repeated the line "never again." What does this mean, that we shall never again come to the aid of democracies threatened by aggressive totalitarians? Or is it merely the confused reiteration of a noble goal, just as "nuclear disarmament" is a noble goal which some confuse today for a policy. Then too we heard people speak of war as futile. Alas, this also is one of the confused ideas of the present. The Allies waged war to destroy Nazism, and there are very few Nazis around to tell us that war was futile.

Nations commemorate events like D-Day with two goals in mind. The country honors those men who fought and occasionally died, for their sacrifice preserved its history and its values. The country wishes to reflect on the lessons of the event.

In the America of 1984 these two goals are not as easily accomplished as in the past. Stupidity is even more prevalent than in the 1930s. Many Americans, often in influential positions, are not so certain of the goodness of our history and our values. Then, too, though they are certain that we were menaced by militaristic totalitarians wearing swastikas, they are not so sure that we are menaced by militaristic totalitarians wearing red stars.

There was, of course, a lesson to be learned from the great war against Nazism, a lesson that makes World War II strikingly relevant to our times. Before the carnage began Charles de Gaulle anticipated it, though few listened. In 1932 he wrote, "If those who make use of the force of France lose heart, not only will our country be menaced, but the very harmony of the general order of things will be shattered. If wise men give up the use of power, what madmen will seize it, what fanatics?" This, of course, is what Winston Churchill had in mind when he lamented at war's end that "there never was a war more easy to stop," but first you need wise men and not too many madmen. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



WHAT IMMIGRATION CRISIS?

by Tom Bethell

As I write the new immigration bill has passed the House of Representatives by a five-vote margin, but still has to go to conference committee and then return to be voted on once again by both houses. I assume that it will pass in one form or another. According to Lou Cannon's column in the *Washington Post,* the White House, which supported the bill, "did not expect it to pass," and when it did, "there was no rejoicing in the White House." Translation: The White House hoped the bill would fail despite its support. The idea here was to appease the newspaper editorial writers (about the only visible backers of the legislation) by supporting the bill, but to maintain, by the tepidity of one's support, the affection of Hispanics, at an earlier moment targeted by the White House as potential Republicans.

The new immigration bill is unpredictable in its effects, but just might go down in the history books as one of the worst pieces of legislation in postwar American history, and I think that we should therefore bear in mind the names of its sponsors very much as we remember Smoot-Hawley, the supporters of the high-tariff legislation that launched the Great Depression. The Smoot-Hawley of immigration are Alan Simpson and Romano Mazzoli, the former a Republican senator from Wyoming, and the winner of this year's "Strange New Respect" award from the Washington Association of Liberal Journalists; the latter a Democratic congressman from Kentucky.

Rarely has any legislation been supported and passed both Houses with such a lack of candor all 'round. Consider the Republicans. Many of them supported the measure ostensibly on the grounds that a "country has the right to control its borders." This is true, but, as Patrick Buchanan pointed out in his excellent newspaper column, the unacknowledged reason for support was racialist and nativist sentiment about America. Some Republicans (and conservatives) think of the United States as a country which should be primarily European in composition, and all these Mexicans and Orientals worry them, frankly. In this, they could not be more wrong. West Europeans are increasingly turning out to be a cowardly, spoilt, and effete bunch. What America needs now is people from all over the world, low income and uneducated people especially, because they are the ones who will appreciate the country, will defend it and perpetuate it. University-educated Europeans are now of dubious value, if you ask me. They are inclined to think that America would be fine if only it were more like Europe. Which is exactly what we *don't* want.

The Republicans who supported the bill for undisclosed nativist reasons seem not to have noticed that its effect may be the opposite of what they anticipated. I mean, if you really think your country should "regain control of its borders," then why not simply vote for the money for a greatly enlarged Border Patrol? No one seems to have asked this question. The reason of course is that the liberals and the Hispanics were not about to countenance any such measure. Instead the bill contains an amnesty provision which will tend to increase the number of people coming across the borders. The precedent of rewarding with citizenship those who arrived il-

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legally (before January 1, 1982) is bound to create the expectation that such illegal behavior will be rewarded once again in the future. Moreover, the cut-off date is quite irrelevant because most illegals, if they want to stay, soon learn about the thriving market in forged documents.

Thus it is possible, I have to admit, that the bill will simply increase the number of aliens coming into the United States, and if that were its sole and certain outcome, I would say: Well done Simpson, well done Mazzoli, well done nativist, Eurocentric, Republican congressmen. But there are other possibilities, and at this point we turn to those Democrats and editorial writers who supported the legislation. Chris Matthews, an aide to House Speaker Tip O'Neill, told me that this bill should really have been named after the American Newspaper Association, or words to that effect. The editorial campaign on behalf of Simpson-Mazzoli was a triumph of opinion-making, with newspaper stories conveying the idea that we are experiencing a "crisis" of immigration when no such thing is remotely true. O'Neill's instincts to kill the bill were correct the first time around (last October), but he was subjected to a Hive attack and he relented, against his own better political judgment.

Why did the journalists support and the liberal Democrats vote for the bill? The operative word here is "control." The way the good liberal sees it (and he is very likely working as a reporter for a newspaper these days), there are all these people in America toiling away at jobs, productively at work and paying their taxes—yet they are "out of control." For such people, the potential allure of the welfare office is subordinated to fear of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Thus all official entanglements tend to be avoided: On the whole illegal aliens don't go near government offices, unemployment bureaus, voting booths (although there is some illegal voting, I have heard); they stay away from union organizers, from social workers, welfare-rights workers, Legal Services agitators, ACLU busybodies—in short from the whole range of meddlers whose activities are guaranteed (and intended) to make the individual more dependent on the state (in the name of championing his cause and "protecting his rights").

So the idea of amnesty was to get these people to come forward and *claim* these "rights" by eliminating the one crucial deterrent: their illegal status.

Again, the liberals obviously could not very easily come right out and *say* that what they wanted was to get control of the lives of millions more people, although that was exactly what they did want. So the argument for amnesty was couched in terms of a non sequitur so astounding that no one seems to have pointed it out. "Well," said the amnesty proponent, "we can't just round all these people up and throw them out of the country, can we?" As though that were what the liberals were planning to do if Simpson-Mazzoli had failed.

Of course the problem with amnesty, both from the point of view of control-conscious Democrats and race-conscious Republicans, was precisely that it threatened to attract more and more illegal aliens across the border. Hence the other main component of the bill—employer sanctions. These amount to a new layer of regulation for businessmen, who are now called upon to enforce the immigration laws. This feature in itself tacitly acknowledges what should have been obvious to the Republicans all along—that the bill never did have anything to do with controlling our borders and a lot to do with controlling the people within those borders, whether they be employers or employees.

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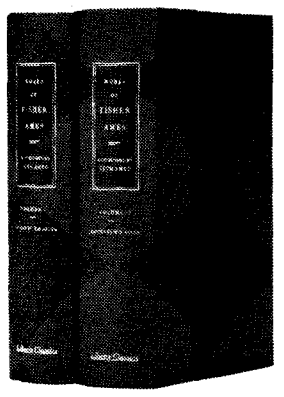

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But here again the actual effect of the legislation is hard to foresee, and could be perverse. The sanctions will certainly be a nuisance for small businesses (but not large, which is why the bill was supported by the Business Roundtable and opposed by the Chamber of Commerce), but it is possible that the sanctions will be mild enough not to make a great deal of difference at hiring time (and again, think of every determined illegal as having a fake ID in his pocket). Thus it seems likely that the sanctions will not be very effective (as they have proved not to be in numerous other countries), and so we are back to what may be the great imponderable of this legislation: Are the aliens who seek and obtain amnesty likely to go on welfare? Currently there is a provision in the bill that makes most amnestied aliens ineligible for most federal welfare benefits for five years. If this provision survives, and we do not get any horrid HHS types luring aliens astray with "benefit" (dependency) packages, the bill just might be ineffective and therefore comparatively harmless. (Nevertheless, some legalized aliens *will* go on welfare since in some states they will be eligible for state welfare immediately, and at the federal level left-wing agitprop lawyers will be sure to file suit against the "discrimination" involved in denying welfare "rights" to a specific group of previously "victimized" residents.)

My impression is that when it comes to immigration, the country is better off with Democrats in power. In the Carter years there was similar talk of an immigration "crisis" (with, on the surface, more justification at that time in the form of the Mariel boat lift from Cuba, Vietnamese refugees, etc.), but in the end no one did anything except let them come, which was undoubtedly the best policy.

Republicans (some of them carrying about in their hip pockets dog-eared copies of *The Camp of the Saints,* a cautionary but non-germane tale about alien hordes overrunning France) are more often inclined to believe the rhetoric of crisis as applied to immigration. Both Republicans and Democrats, of late, have tended to miss the point that America needs all the people it can get—a point that may be more apparent five years from now than it is today.

Simpson-Mazzoli could turn out to be to immigration what Jimmy Carter's National Energy Policy was to energy. It could actually create the crisis that was illusory until someone tried to repair it. Most Republicans understand that the only energy policy you need is laissez-faire; remove the controls and let buyers and sellers agree with one another on a price. Likewise most Democrats have not been too rigid about establishing a "national immigration policy." But now, I suspect, we do have one, and it will need endless tinkering and fixing and adjustment, and we may even have to go through the immigration equivalent of gas lines. That could mean labor shortages, ultimately.

As evidence of Republican dimness on this issue, George Gilder tells me that INS agents have recently been snooping around Silicon Valley, of all places, telling employers that there would be "no more Mr. Nice Guy," and that approximately 20 percent of the people employed in the world's most productive and technologically advanced spot are *illegally* employed and should be sent back home immediately! And with *that* absurdity as the alternative, Simpson-Mazzoli maybe doesn't look so bad after all. Perhaps the best chance is to give everyone amnesty, hope that they have already acquired the habit of working and so will avoid welfare, and trust that the employer sanctions will lack teeth, thus encouraging a new wave of aliens to come pouring in across the border. That, we can be sure, will remain porous, whatever happens. □

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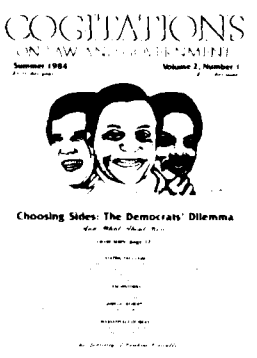

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Jude Wanniski

A SECOND TERM GAME PLAN

There's no reason for Mr. Reagan to be vague about his plans.

President Reagan's landslide re-election this November will be followed by a second term that will secure his place in history as one of the greatest of Presidents. The achievements of his second term in fostering an era of peace and prosperity will also complete the transformation of the Republican party into the party of economic growth and secure its dominance into the twenty-first century.

At least this is what could be, and the probabilities are good that it will be. The outlines of the second Reagan term can already be seen or surmised. And we can project many of the details by assessing what we know of the inclinations of the President and his party as we have seen them shaped in the first Administration.

There are a few important prerequisites. The most important still at issue is the requirement that Mr. Reagan actually seek a mandate for his vision of a second term. Many of his key political advisers are urging a campaign strategy that would have him be relatively vague about his plans. The voters would be asked to re-elect Mr. Reagan based on the success of his first term and to trust that he would perform similarly in his second.

This strategy is a perfectly good one for the President's re-election. But it would give him neither the mandate he needs for specific reforms nor the Republican victories in the Senate and House that are essential for a dynamic second term. It follows the 1956 pattern that brought President Eisenhower an easy re-election victory over Adlai Stevenson, but which saw a wave of liberal Democrats elected to an increasingly Democratic Congress.

Eisenhower had no agenda for his second term and ran an "I-Like-Ike, He-Got-Us-Out-of-Korea" campaign. This permitted Democratic congressional candidates to exploit voter worries that Eisenhower would pursue balance-the-budget austerity measures in his second term. Voters did like Ike, but they insured against his austerity inclinations by giving him a solidly Democratic Congress.

This year, Walter Mondale and the Democrats face the same kind of problem. Voters like Ron. Mr. Mondale's only real chance of defeating the President comes through his attempt to persuade the voters that a second Reagan term will be fundamentally different from the first.

The Mondale pitch already being elaborated is this: Yes, there is an economic expansion that has made the President a popular figure, but it has been "bought" with massive deficit spending, $200 billion in federal deficits as far as the eye can see. As soon as Mr. Reagan is re-elected, goes the argument, he will seek to pay these bills by raising taxes on the poor and middle-class and by slashing social spending, leaving military outlays relatively untouched. A recession in 1985 will result. Mr. Mondale attempts to revive the old New Deal coalition by arguing that he would have "the rich" pay these bills through income-tax surcharges and that military outlays would be pared. If the Republicans do not have a plausible counter to this pitch, Ron would likely still beat Fritz, but Democrats would likely take the Senate and hold their solid lead in the House. The second Reagan Administration would be contentious, indeterminate, moving sideways rather than forward.

Similarly on foreign policies, Mr. Mondale and the Democrats will assert, as they have been doing, that because the President will not be "accountable" in his second term, because he cannot go before the voters for a third term, he can indulge his hard-line, militaristic propensities. He may soon after election send troops into Central America (his "December surprise," Democrats suggest). And his rigid anti-Soviet posture will increase the danger of nuclear war and also expand the arms race.

In the absence of a coherent foreign-policy agenda for his second term, the President finds himself forced to respond to these kinds of attacks by simply altering his rhetoric. Instead of growling at the Kremlin, he coos. If the presidential campaign unfolds along this line, Mr. Reagan will of course be pushed further and further into making substantive concessions. It will not take much for the President to come to resemble Senators Baker and Percy, whose foreign-policy views are created for them by the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, which is where Mr. Mondale finds out what he thinks.

From this standpoint, it's not realistic even to think of what the President's second term will bring unless we can assume he and the party will put forward the general game plan. We'd expect to see this in the Republican Platform that will be adopted at the August national convention in Dallas, and in the campaigns of the President and the congressional candidates. It's a must.

The distinguishing characteristic of Ronald Reagan's run for the Presidency in 1980 was his pledge of a 30-percent across-the-board cut in marginal income-tax rates. It was the one idea that separated him from his Republican rivals for the presidential nomination. It was the idea that most distinguished him from President Carter. And when enacted and in place, the Reagan tax cut was the distinguishing feature of the expanding U.S. economy. Because the tax cut was a purely domestic move, its expansionary effects were felt only indirectly by the rest of the world economy. In the next four years, we can expect the rest of the world to emulate the

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Reagan "supply-side" tax cuts, and the United States will feel the secondary effects of the global expansion of productivity and production that will follow.

The key to it all, though, is the monetary reform that must be the distinguishing feature of the second administration. Because the dollar is the invoice currency for 70 percent of world trade, international monetary reform must begin in the U.S. Yet such reform will have immediate, beneficial effects on the world economy. Only monetary reform can solve the domestic deficit problem and the international debt crisis that besets the Third World and their industrial-nation creditors. Only monetary reform can bring down dollar interest rates in a way that expands the U.S. and world economy. The only reform worth discussing is a gold-based reform, the kind the President came close to embracing in 1980.

The decision to break permanently the dollar's link to gold was made by President Nixon in 1973, with the heaviest shove coming from his Treasury Secretary George Shultz, on the advice of his friend Milton Friedman. Professor Friedman believed the Federal Reserve, if it followed his money-supply theories, could manage the dollar's value by ignoring the price signals that the gold market provides. The great inflation followed, with the quadrupling of the gold price in this "greenback" era preceding the quadrupling of the dollar price of oil in the fall of 1973.

President Reagan is well aware that no great nation has ever left a gold-based money system for managed greenbacks, "fiat money," as he puts it, and remained a great nation. Gold, universally recognized as the most monetary of all commodities, is the surest guide to incipient inflations and deflations. When it rises in price, it signals the onset of a general price rise. When it falls, the general price level deflates. The increased risk of either forces higher interest rates, which is what we have observed when gold's price signals have been ignored. In the last dozen years of fiat dollars, the Federal Reserve has taken the U.S. and world economy on a roller coaster ride of inflations and deflationary recessions.

The greatest shortcoming of President Reagan's first term has been in the area of foreign economic policy.

By effecting a monetary reform that once again requires the Treasury and the Federal Reserve to stabilize the dollar value of gold at a price determined to be optimum—balancing the interests of debtors and creditors—President Reagan would lay the foundation for a worldwide non-inflationary economic boom. With the credit system rebuilt around a stable dollar, "gold-standard interest rates" would return, typically three to five percent.

This growth-oriented reform would dissolve the worldwide debt crisis. The U.S. national debt, approaching $1.7 trillion, would require $221 billion annually in debt service costs at current 13 percent interest rates; at 5 percent, debt service plummets to $85 billion. American farmers, savaged by two Fed deflations since 1980, would be able to refinance their staggering debt load, enabling farm subsidies to decline by at least $10 billion. The reduced cost of capital would shrink the costs of national defense by several times that amount.

The campaign appeal of a balanced budget through lower interest rates and economic growth rather than tax hikes and spending cuts is obvious. The appeal to families, especially young families, of low-interest home mortgages is also self-evident.

Such reform would bring profound relief to the dozens of Third World nations which, like U.S. farmers, have been crushed by the dollar deflations of recent years. They would not only be able to refinance their dollar debts, now well over $600 billion, at much lower interest rates and longer maturities. They would be able to sell their commodities to an expanding world market at stable, not falling, prices.

For this reason, monetary reform must be initiated at the outset of the President's second term, not put off until 1986 as some Administration officials have recommended to the President. The same people who diverted Mr. Reagan from monetary reform in the 1980 campaign would devote 1985 to fiscal action, believing the newly re-elected President would have his best chance of slashing social spending and entitlement programs in the first year of his new term. These are precisely the fears that Walter Mondale is fanning among the voters, which would deal the President a more Democratic Congress that would stymie spending cuts and bring renewed pressures for higher taxes. At the same time, deferral of monetary reform would invite a wave of Third World debt repudiations in 1985—the only alternative to social strife—leading President Reagan into a perpetual state of crisis management that would poison his second term.

There are sufficient numbers of senior Reagan aides who are aware of this specter to support his inclination to monetary reform this time around. This low interest-rate strategy would thus be the key to GOP congressional victories that would make tax reform possible.

The Administration is planning on a simplification of the tax code, some form of "flat tax" that preserves the major tax deductions that affect most households: interest on home mortgages, state and local taxes, charitable deductions. But as long as the deficit problem hangs over its head, the pressure on the Administration is to think not of fairness, simplicity, and the incentive effects of lower marginal rates, but of increasing tax revenues. Mr. Mondale will continue to warn voters that the Treasury tax study that is due to report in December, after the election, will propose to lower marginal rates for the rich and increase taxes on the poor and middle class, through some form of national sales tax. The Administration has not denied such charges because those people in the Administration who advocate a fiscal solution to the deficit problem have promoted this idea as a live option.

If the President does not offer the voters a specific tax reform proposal during the campaign, he will be unable to refute the Mondale charges. Mr. Reagan can't simply hide behind a study. This would force uncertain voters to elect more Democrats to insure that a consumption tax will not be able to get through Congress. In 1982, the White House strategists believed they had defused the Social Security issue by arranging a bipartisan commission to report after the congressional elections. This did not prevent Democrats from warning the voters that the commission might try to savage benefits.

At some point, then, whether in the platform or as an impromptu campaign decision, we can expect Mr. Reagan to refute the Mondale warnings by committing himself to the Kemp-Kasten flat-tax proposal or something like it. Kemp-Kasten, which would lower the top marginal income-tax rate to 25 percent and the top corporate rate to 30 percent, was not designed with the goal of higher revenues. It was designed to increase the efficiency of the economy, which, as a side effect, would expand the tax base, reduce tax evasion, and expand revenues in a growing economy. The plan would double the personal exemption for each taxpayer, spouse, and dependent to $2,000 and increase the standard deduction, thereby removing 1.4 million of the lower income taxpayers from the tax rolls. The White House is already moving toward endorsement of this provision, expecting the Democrats will do likewise. But the President will not be able to avoid offering a complete, growth-oriented tax strategy *à la* Kemp-Kasten without remaining on the defensive. Political necessity and his own inclinations will take him in that direction.

In the 1980 campaign, Mr. Reagan went to the South Bronx and committed himself to the idea of Enterprise Zones. The idea is to lower tax rates in those areas of the country like the South Bronx where unemployment is

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so high and opportunity so low that tax revenues are meager. The policy would be of great benefit to the Democratic constituents of these inner cities. But it is precisely for this reason that the bill has not been enacted; Democrats seem to believe they cannot permit the President and the GOP to get credit for inner-city revitalization through free-market forces rather than government-spending solutions. They would tend to lose constituents to the Republican party as minorities developed vested interests in market solutions. Enterprise zones will again be part of the Reagan campaign. And they will become a feature of the second term. Again, though, it will take more Republicans in Congress to overcome the vested interests of the Democrats.

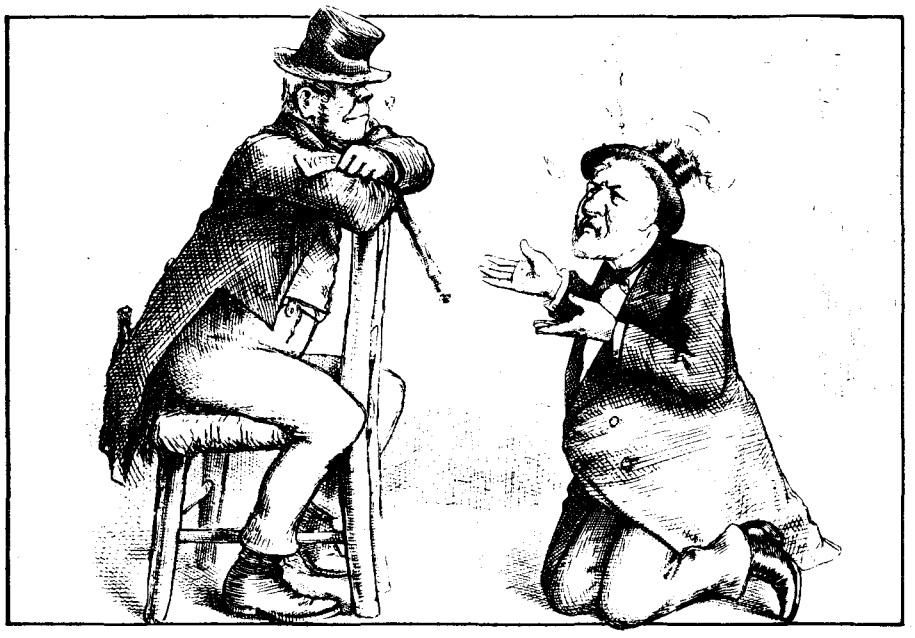
The greatest shortcoming of President Reagan's first term has been in the area of foreign economic policy. This is only partly due to the fact that the dollar has fluctuated wildly with a deflationary bent in the absence of a monetary standard. Third World nations that had acquired dollar debts in the last, inflationary years of the Carter Administration found the dollar value of their productive assets—the collateral for their loans—nose-diving with the dollar deflation. But at least we can say the Adminstration was oblivious to the fact that its support of monetarist policies at the Fed was the direct cause of this anguish in the world's poorest nations, especially in the dollar sphere in Latin America.

The Administration has no excuses, though, for blindly supporting the austerity policies of the International Monetary Fund. The IMF, after all, is dominated by the United States, both the government and American multinational banks. When Third World countries found themselves unable to pay their dollar debts in the U.S.-induced deflation, the IMF bounced around from one capital to another with dollars to loan on the condition that these nationals tax their citizens more heavily, always in ways that led to capital flight. The IMF has acted not as a doctor to sick economies, but as a collection agent for U.S. banks.

Mr. Reagan has understood and championed supply-side tax policies for the U.S. But what about his State Department and Treasury, who know full well the oppressive, counter-productive tax rates borne by the people of the Third World? At the outset of the Reagan Administration there had been great hopes that it would push the IMF to induce growth-oriented tax and currency policies in exchange for their loans, so the loans could be paid back out of growth. The exact opposite has been followed, with State and Treasury bureaucrats enthusiastically supporting the IMF "medicine" of higher taxes and currency devaluations. The results have been dire. We will not hear anything about this in the fall campaign, however. The practices of the IMF are those shaped by the Council on Foreign Relations and Trilateral Commission, policies designed by U.S. banking interests. The Democratic establishment and the Republican establishment are fully supportive, and policies thus do not change from one administration to the next. Because he was not an establishment figure, Ronald Reagan should have pressed for new policies. But the establishment quickly co-opted him in this area and it's not even certain he knows what hit him.

In the same way, the President blundered early in Central America by endorsing the socialist reforms the Carter Administration had fostered in El Salvador: confiscatory land-reforms, the nationalizing of banking and trade, and redistributionist tax policies. This was the same formula that was forced on South Vietnam in the early Kennedy years, policies that destroyed the South Vietnamese economy and made a U.S. military solution impossible.

The President has been ardent in pressing for democratic institutions in the Third World, breaking with establishment policies that have long assumed poor countries are not ready for democracy. But here too the establishment outflanked him in El Salvador. When Salvadorans in 1982 voted against the socialist plan by voting in the party that had opposed it, the Reagan State Department was persuaded to withhold U.S. support of that government. The CIA subsequently used taxpayer funds to finance the socialist party. The President's docility in this area has been the gravest blot in his first term.



Only monetary reform can solve the domestic deficit problem and the international debt crisis.

In a second term, things can only get better. This will almost certainly require Cabinet or at least subcabinet changes, people with the interest, knowledge, and energy to alter these profoundly important foreign economic policies. The President also has to focus his attention here instead of simply accepting counsel. If there is international monetary reform pursued in 1985 he will have time for such use of his resources; otherwise, he and his team will be occupied by crisis management.

Much of the President's resources in his first term have gone to national defense and strategic diplomacy with our allies *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union. By the summer of 1982 he was headed toward failure as the Federal Reserve deflation pushed the U.S. economy into deep recession. A President cannot lead the free world if he cannot preside over a healthy domestic economy, and in the depths of the recession Mr. Reagan's foreign policy was said to be in disarray. The bull market that began in August of 1982, with the Fed's ending of its two-year deflation, foreshadowed the economic boom that restored confidence at home and abroad in Mr. Reagan's leadership. In this environment, the West Germans elected a government that backed the NATO decision to deploy Pershing missiles in Europe. At the same time, the Soviet Union sank into deeper economic depression as leadership changed hands through death again and again. As a further setback to Soviet strategic interests, China's economy began to blossom as it marched down the capitalist road, a development the President observed firsthand as he cemented relations with Peking.

In his second term, he will confront the delicate problem of dealing with a bitter, demoralized Kremlin, ideologically and economically bankrupt yet dangerously armed. The President almost single-handedly has put the U.S. on a path toward development of a space-based anti-missile defense, the so-called "Star Wars" program (which Walter Mondale derides as a "magic curtain"). The Soviets are alarmed at this shift in U.S. strategic policy away from Mutually Assured Destruction toward Mutually Assured Defense. And Mr. Reagan's pollsters are finding the idea enormously popular with the electorate. All this does mean that Mr. Reagan will have to find ways to let the Soviets get out of the corner they have been backed into and draw them into the expanding world economy. Former President Nixon advocates a trade avenue. A unilateral U.S. decision to grant the Soviets most-favored-nation trade status will probably be considered. Any such step would of course have to be seen as an act of strength on the part of the U.S., which means a U.S. economy in continued expansion. The Soviets are viewed as being hopelessly intractable, but it was not long ago that the Chinese were viewed as being even more hopeless.

"Councils of war breed timidity and defeatism," Douglas MacArthur was fond of saying, meaning that a committee of advisers tend to look for reasons not to do something that involves breaking with conventional wisdom. There are incrementalists everywhere around the President, urging him to move by inches if at all. The President is not an incrementalist but a revolutionary, which is why he carefully listens to the counsel of his incrementalist advisers. When the arguments are not persuasive, he feels confident in advancing the revolution. In his second term as governor of California he moved far more boldly than he did in his first, feeling surer of himself, his scope, and his instincts. With a few major exceptions, he has been masterful in his first term in leading the Reagan Revolution. There's no reason to think he will be anything but superb in his second. □

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Patrick J. Buchanan and J. Gordon Muir

GAY TIMES AND DISEASES

Whom the Democrats would embrace, they may be infected by.

Gay Rights is no longer a debatable issue within the Democratic Party—Ann Lewis, Political Director, DNC.

Well, Ann, perhaps. But when the Democratic Convention opens with fifty thousand Sodomites marching down Castro Street under the command of Sister Boom Boom—the transvestite who wears a nun's habit and rolled up 23,000 votes for city supervisor—the Democrats observing from home may consider it a "debatable issue" indeed.

Gay Rights promises to become for the eighties what busing and abortion were to the seventies, the social issue that sunders the Democratic coalition. Mondale, Hart, and Jackson have all signed on to the non-negotiable demand of the movement: that "sexual preference" be written into the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to designate another category, homosexuals, against whom it will henceforth be a federal crime to discriminate. Can the Democrats have reflected seriously upon the ramifications of this latest pandering to a militant special interest?

Currently, gays and Lesbians are routinely severed from the armed services. The military has always considered such severances essential to good order, discipline, and morale. But if Gay Rights are written into federal law, not only will homosexuals in the service come out of the closet; they will have to be admitted to West Point and Annapolis, the Air Force Academy and VMI.

Basic training of 18-year-old Marine recruits will include sensitivity training on the proper respect to be accorded the "alternative life style" of their gay comrades in the barracks. Landlords who refuse to rent apartments or beach houses to homosexual couples will be subject to federal prosecution. So, too, will high schools, grammar schools, nursery schools, and day-care centers that recoil at hiring homosexual teachers, counselors, or custodians.

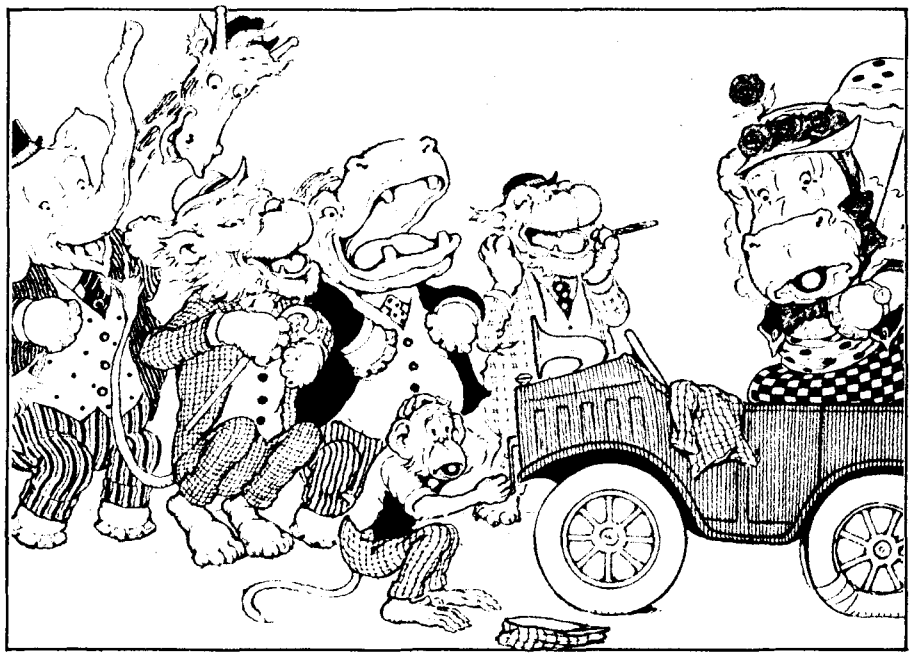
Already, political collisions are occurring. Mayor Ed Koch was forced to terminate $4 million in program grants when the Salvation Army refused to sign a pledge not to discriminate against gays in hiring for its day-care centers. The Catholic Archdiocese sided with the Salvation Army. In New Orleans, Archbishop Phillip Hannon warned the city council a gay rights ordinance would be met with a diocesan-led campaign for repeal. The council backed down. In affluent, trendy Montgomery County, Maryland, a gay rights ordinance goes on the ballot this fall because 25,000 voters signed a Christian Fundamentalist preacher's petition demanding a referendum on repeal.

Increasingly, traditionalist religious communities and the Gay Rights activists are seeing each other as social and political antagonists. A microcosm of this conflict is the annual Gay Pride march in Manhattan, where the strategic objective of the marching homosexuals has become capture of the cathedral steps of St. Patrick's, and their conversion into a "reviewing stand" for the parade.

The bizarre details of these parades are usually censored in the national press. Last year, there were men marching naked except for pubic pouches and floats proclaiming "Dykes and Tykes." A giant banner was unfurled on the cathedral steps proclaiming, "Intolerance and Ignorance Taught Here." The mockery of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the late Cardinal Cook has been commonplace. Two years ago, the featured float was a garbage can on wheels with a huge crucifix inside it.

On the flip side, however, Paul Moore, Episcopal Bishop of New York, has written the *New York Times* that gays "make an enormous contribution to the commercial, artistic, and religious life of our city."

Then there is the issue of children. Gay activists vehemently deny there is a greater incidence of child abuse among homosexuals than heterosexuals. But the presence in Gay Pride marches of NAMBLA—the North American Man/Boy Love Association, which lobbies for repeal of laws prohibiting sex with children—is hardly reassuring. Declares NAMBLA militant Charles Snively of Boston: "[We at NAMBLA] attack a presupposition . . . that parents have a hereditary right to their children, that parents have a right to their children that we do not have." At a 1975 conference of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality in Britain, the question was put to a thousand gays as to how many would find child sex attractive. One-third responded in the affirmative, according to the *Daily Telegraph*.



To most Americans, however, a tolerant people, the prevalent attitude seems to be: So long as they don't bother us, leave them be. What now threatens this attitude of benign neglect is the alarming and deepening health crisis inside the homosexual community—especially in cities like New York and San Francisco, the Sodom and Gomorrah of the Sexual Revolution.

AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, the killer disease that has claimed 4600 victims—40 percent of whom are already dead—is but the tip of an immense iceberg. Within the homosexual community, there are today incubating pandemic, rare, and exotic diseases with a time-bomb potential of exploding into the general population. Without descending into clinical detail, some concept of the "gay life style" needs to be understood. Its essence is random, repeated, anonymous sex—runaway promiscuity. The chapel of this new faith has been the bath house.

According to Dr. Kinsey, the *average* homosexual has 1000 sex partners in a lifetime. *Village Voice* put the figure at 1600. One activist has said that 10,000 sex partners in the lifetime of a "very active" homosexual would not be extraordinary. (Frank Sinatra was once quoted as saying that had he romanced half as many women as gossip-mongers contended, he would be speaking from a jar at the Harvard

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Medical School.) Many gays visit these bath houses two and three times a week, where ten contacts a night are not uncommon. A study a decade ago found that more than half the active gay males (Lesbians have more enduring relationships) engaged in group sex at least once a month.

As a consequence of this jackrabbitry, young men living the gay life in America's large cities are infecting and re-infecting one another with a variety of diseases that suggests that the proper term to describe their behavior is suicidal. By the precise way in which they define themselves, they are killing themselves.

That realization is hitting the Gay Community. A year ago, a co-author of this article was denounced as a "homophobe" by Governor Cuomo and Mayor Koch for suggesting that Gotham's bath houses be shut down as a health hazard during Gay Pride Week. Early this year, San Francisco homosexuals themselves took the lead in demanding a municipal decree outlawing sex in the city's baths. As one gay writer told the *Washington Post*: "You can take away AIDS and you're still looking at a community that happens to be a diseased community. I'm sorry. The bulk of your venereal diseases now reside within the gay community. The bulk of enteric (intestinal) diseases is now within the gay community."

When it comes to health, declares the *Medical Tribune,* the gay life is "no bed of roses." It never was—notwithstanding the mendacious propaganda of gay activists to paint homosexuality as a natural and healthy alternative. Laboring under this self-generated delusion, hundreds of thousands of young men have been indulging themselves in what *Newsweek* termed a "carefree sexual adventure, a headlong gambol on the far side of the human libido." Well, the adventure is ending—and it is revealed for what it always was: an egregious assault upon the ecology of the human body. Call it nature's retribution, God's will, the wages of sin, paying the piper, ecological kickback, whatever phraseology you prefer. The facts demonstrate that promiscuous homosexual conduct is utterly destructive of human health.

This is not to disavow sympathy for those horribly caught up in the most highly publicized consequence of the homosexual life style—AIDS. There are few sadder or more pathetic human tragedies than the stories of young men trying to cope with the sudden crushing agony of discovering that they have this inexorably fatal disease. An element of that tragedy is that the victims were lied to—consistently. As one 28-year-old AIDS victim from New York City told *Newsweek*: "The belief that was handed to me was that sex was liberating and more sex was more liberating." Nobody told that young man, now under a sentence of death, that his life style and his body were on a fatal collision course.

The AIDS epidemic has been the single most prominent factor in blowing apart the "natural alternative" myth about homosexuality—a myth that should have been dispelled before the first AIDS case came to light. But organized medicine has been timid to the point of cowardice in speaking openly about the health consequences of homosexual practice. Why? Quite simple. Warning people about the health hazards of promiscuous eating or drinking is sound advice. Warning people about the health hazards of promiscuous or unnatural sexual activity is not advice. It is "moralizing." And moralizing is wrong!

Gay Rights promises to become for the eighties what busing and abortion were to the seventies.

As a consequence of this "conspiracy of silence" in the medical community—one physician's phrase—tens of thousands of young men joyously embarked upon their pleasure cruises, ignorant of the fate awaiting them at journey's end—while the science pages of the fashionable press were given over to learned discussion of the medical consequences of exhaled cigarette smoke upon the nonsmoking passengers of United Airlines.

The real story is that there are several epidemics running loose, not all of them permanently confined to the gay community. They have been largely or solely caused, and perpetuated, by the growing urban population of active gays whose modal form of sexual behavior is impersonal, repeated, random, and anonymous sex. (The typical AIDS victim admits to five different sex encounters monthly.)

How did gays get led into this mess? Again, very simple: They followed leaders who spouted slogans and clichés about "rights." They took intellectual comfort from harebrained psychologists who peddled nonsense in the guise of learning. When George Will, in a 1977 *Newsweek* column, suggested that homosexuality was "an injury to healthy functioning," gay leaders John O'Leary and Bruce Voeller screamed "outrage" at this "unsupported and totally false statement." Shortly thereafter, gay history professor Martin Duberman, challenging the view that homosexuality was abnormal, wrote in *Skeptic* that "almost all the recent scientific literature . . . points to exactly the opposite conclusion." (Duberman did not indicate what scientific literature he had been reading.)

Some of the most profound rot on the subject was penned back in 1975 in *Psychology Today* by San Francisco psychologist Mark Freedman (a founding member of the Association of Gay Psychologists):

> . . . homosexuality in some cases can lead to better-than-average functioning and to a fuller realization of certain fundamental values.
>
> Gay people . . . commonly decide to have sex for the sake of sex . . . The prospective partners don't have to feign love or any other emotion . . . Moreover, gay men are more comfortable engaging in group sex than nongay men, and group sex in my opinion offers pleasures that are impossible for couples.
>
> Gay people constitute a large and varied group and they are capable of providing new kinds of personal fulfillment and social vitality.

With this sort of science-fiction in vogue, gay liberation became clamorous. The movement demanded all manner of reform: That sex education courses in public schools taught by gays portray homosexuality as a valid, healthy life style. That gay love stories be available in libraries and schools.

One goal the gay movement sought desperately was removal of the term "homosexuality" as a category of mental disorder from the diagnostic manual of the American Psychiatric Association. This they achieved. The APA had probably never before seen such pressure, but that is a story in itself. The APA capitulated. In an attempt at explanation the APA said, "no doubt homosexual activist groups will claim that psychiatry has at last recognized that homosexuality is as 'normal' as heterosexuality. They will be wrong. In removing homosexuality *per se* from the nomenclature we are only recognizing that by itself homosexuality does not meet the criteria for being considered a psychiatric disorder." *Time* magazine called the APA's action "an awkward compromise by a confused and defensive profession." That the APA was confused and defensive should be no surprise. So was almost everyone else.

Despite intense pressure to recognize homosexuality (and its model sex practices) as normal human behavior, a few in the medical profession refused to capitulate. In a letter to *Patient Care,* Prof. James Kurfees of the University of Louisville School of Medicine declared himself "appalled" at the way "this deviant sexual behavior is now dignified with more and more pseudoscience. Most of the homosexuals I have known have been pretty miserable, unhappy misfits." A 1982 report by the American Medical Association's council on scientific affairs stated that "Any person, of whatever sexual preference, who shows a dominant pattern of frequent sexual activity with many partners who are and will remain strangers, presents evidence of shallow, narcissistic, impersonal, often compulsively driven genital- rather than person-oriented sex and is almost always regarded as pathological."

A recent signed editorial in the *Southern Medical Journal* refers to the homosexual disease epidemics as a "kickback." Quoting from the book *Homosexuality and the Law: From Condemnation to Celebration,* the author notes that "The law on homosexuality is changing rapidly. It is moving from condemnation to legitimation and next . . . to sponsorship." Even now, he points out, we have such things as "Gay Pride Month, with notable politicians lending their support to gays by marching with them down public thoroughfares." The author proceeds to ask the key question:

> If we act as empirical scientists, can we not see the implications of the data before us? If homosexuality, or even just male homosexuality, is "OK," then why the high prevalence of associated complications both in general and especially with regard to AIDS? Might not these "complications" be "consequences"? Might it be that our society's approval of homosexuality is an error and that the unsubtle words of wisdom of the Bible are frightfully correct?

The writer adds that "from an empirical medical perspective alone, current scientific observation seems to require the conclusion that homosexuality is a pathologic condition . . . certain cause and effect data are convincing—so convincing that health care providers, in this age of unbridled enthusiasm for preventive medicine, would do well to seek reversal treatment for their homosexual patients just as vigorously as they would for alcoholics or heavy cigarette smokers, for what may not be treated might well be avoided." (Although life-style changes for homosexuals appear to be difficult, there is good evidence they are not impossible.)

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AIDS is a breakdown of the natural immune mechanism of the body. This mechanism, developed in response to the microbial world around us, enables us to live in reasonable ecological balance with our environment. In patients with AIDS the immune system breaks down and the body can no longer effectively fight infection. Organisms normally resisted easily by healthy persons invade the body and cause serious diseases (opportunistic infections). In the early stages the condition is characterized by weight loss, fever, thrush (especially of the throat), diarrhea, and swollen lymph glands. Unusual forms of herpes, cytomegalovirus, TB, and toxoplasmosis may develop. Invasion of the brain by organisms usually never found there can occur. A previously rare form of cancer (Kaposi's sarcoma) may develop; eventually most patients will contract *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia. For many of the infections afflicting AIDS victims there is no treatment. Where drug treatment can be used it proves less effective and more toxic. The fatality rate appears to be 100 percent. No one has ever recovered.

Ninety percent of AIDS victims are sexually active homosexual males or intravenous drug users. Most other victims have been infected by secondary spread from these groups: recipients of blood transfusions or blood components (e.g., hemophiliacs among whom AIDS is now the second most common cause of death); women who have had sexual contact with infected bisexual males; and a few children born to such women. AIDS has occurred in Haitians (about 6 percent of cases) causing them to be listed as a risk group, but there is strong evidence that in these people AIDS had its origin in the gay clubs of Haiti frequented by young poor Haitian male prostitutes and vacationing U.S. gays.

So far there are over 4,000 confirmed cases of AIDS in the U.S. It is estimated that there are 20,000 to 40,000 persons with pre-AIDS (i.e., with some of the early signs, such as swollen lymph glands), and no one can be sure how many persons with no symptoms are incubating the disease. John Maddox, editor of *Nature,* describes the situation as "chilling." According to *Newsweek,* Dr. Donald Abrams of San Francisco General Hospital "estimates that 25 percent of gay men in San Francisco now have lymphadenopathy." If this represents an early stage of AIDS (and there is evidence that it does and that it is infective), then, short of some dramatic behavioral change, the gay community may self-destruct.

The cause of AIDS may recently have been discovered by Dr. Robert Gallo and his research team at the National Institutes of Health. The suspected culprit is a virus designated HTLV-3. This agent may or may not be the sole cause. Some research physicians believe the announcement of this finding was grossly premature, spurred by what the *New York Times* called "a private competition—for fame, prizes, new research funds."

If HTLV-3, frequently found in pre-AIDS patients, is indeed the cause of AIDS, this is a truly ominous finding. *For HTLV-3 has been detected in 75 percent of patients with pre-AIDS and no less than 35 percent of symptomless homosexuals.* Whether or not it is the cause, it appears to be a reliable marker for infected donor blood—a positive finding, which could provide a means to protect the blood supply at the staggering cost of 23 million blood tests per year. However, talk of a cure resulting from this research is nonsense; and talk of a vaccine should await confirmation of Gallo's research.

The nation's blood supply also appears to have been contaminated by homosexual donors, though the present risk of contracting AIDS from a one- or two-unit blood transfusion is low—about one in 100,000. Hemophiliacs, deriving blood components from several thousand units at a time, are at much greater risk. Other ways that AIDS *may* spill over into the general population would theoretically be similar to those applying to hepatitis B. Thus health-care professionals are at some risk as, conversely, are patients in the care of certain homosexually active health-care professionals. So far this problem hasn't materialized, but AIDS is a new disease with a long incubation period (up to four years).

If the AIDS agent is indeed a virus, a worrisome possibility is that changes in virulence will take place, now that the disease is in the amplification system of homosexual promiscuity. It may be that the AIDS agent underwent some change in 1979 that triggered the sudden appearance of the current epidemic. John Maddox asks, "May [it] change again, becoming in the process a more generalized infection of people?" In the microbial world there are precedents. God forbid that such a thing should happen. The result could well be the real "final epidemic" (the description given by a group of physicians to the effects of a nuclear exchange between the U.S. and the USSR). The continuation of human life on this planet would then depend on the rapid development of an AIDS vaccine to protect those not yet infected. This isn't scare talk. The question was raised by the editor of one of the world's leading scientific journals.

Gay leaders, while demanding massive government spending to find an AIDS "cure," are advising gays only to be more careful in their sexual practices. Picture, if you can, the vaulted gothic chapel of the Union Theological Seminary in upper Manhattan with speakers for the Gay Men's Health Crisis standing below a large carved crucifix, graphically explaining the elements of low-risk sex and distributing pamphlets advising the assembled to "shower with your partner as part of your foreplay to check for sores, swollen glands, etc., of which he may not be aware."

Hepatitis B, once uncommon in this country, has become epidemic among active homosexuals. The virus agent is carried in blood, semen, saliva, and possibly in mucus, urine, and sweat. No effective treatment exists for this liver infection, which can progress to cirrhosis and cancer. Transmission through infected semen explains its prevalence in the gay community. One study found that nearly 50 percent of homosexuals with a history of more than 40 sexual partners had evidence of previous infection. Another study of homosexual men in Amsterdam showed evidence of previous infection in over 60 percent—and an annual attack rate of about 30 percent among the previously uninfected.

The hepatitis B epidemic puts the general population at risk in several ways. Health-care workers in contact with body fluids or secretions of carriers are at risk, as, in some cases, are patients cared for by carriers. The carrier rate among homosexuals is 20 to 50 times that of the general population. Again, the blood supply has undoubtedly been contaminated. While there is a test which identifies carrier blood, it is not foolproof, and it may even be less accurate than we thought (maybe 60 percent at best). The question, usually met with thundering silence, is why was it only in 1983, after the AIDS scare, that homosexuals were discouraged from giving blood? Fortunately, there is now a hepatitis B vaccine.

Another equally serious type of hepatitis, for which there are no tests or vaccines, is hepatitis non-A, non-B. An intelligent guess would be that this disease has been propagated in the homosexual community the same way as hepatitis B. Two viruses are possibly involved: They are believed to be the main cause of chronic liver disease in hemophiliacs and of post-transfusion hepatitis. (The problems visited on hemophiliacs by homosexual blood donors through AIDS, and possibly through hepatitis non-A, non-B, have yet to evoke any large measure of contrition from the gay activists whose greatest concern has been with the ethical issue of anonymity attending blood-screening procedures.)

Then there is the "Gay Bowel Syndrome," a group of rare bowel diseases, previously considered "tropical," now epidemic in urban gay communities. These are a particular cause for concern because they can be transmitted by fecal contamination. All it requires is unclean hands in contact with food or water. Inside a population of sexually active gays where oro-anal contact is reportedly practiced by 70-75 percent it is hardly surprising that the increase in these diseases has been described as "explosive."

The main conditions normally considered under the GBS are amebiasis,[1] giardiasis,[2] shigellosis,[3] and hepatitis A.[4] From a public health viewpoint there are several alarming features in these diseases: the rapidly expanding pool of infection in the homosexual community; the ease of spread to the wider public; the tendency for persons to be infected with two or more organisms at once; the difficulty of laboratory diagnosis; the difficulty of clinical diagnosis (they all have common symptoms); the likelihood of active homosexuals repeatedly reinfecting themselves; and the fact that nearly all the GBS groups of diseases have symptomless carrier states.

[1]Amebiasis: a disease of the colon caused by parasites. Causes dysentery and sometimes liver abscesses. Usually picked up from contaminated food.
[2]Giardiasis: a parasitic bowel disease causing diarrhea. Spread in a similar way to amebiasis.
[3]Shigellosis: a bacterial bowel disease which can cause severe dysentery. In children, can be fatal. Contaminated food is the usual cause.
[4]Hepatitis A: a viral liver disease (less serious than B or non-A, non-B) spread by fecal contamination: e.g., food, water, and close person-to-person contact. →

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Back in 1977, a fourfold to tenfold increase in GBS-type diseases was noted in the San Francisco area. Since then the situation has deteriorated. The incidence of shigellosis and hepatitis A in men 20 to 29 years of age is now six to ten times that of men or women in any other age group. Amebiasis and/or giardiasis are estimated to affect between 10,000 and 50,000 men in New York City. The facts are beginning to bear out the contention of one leading British expert, writing in the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* in 1982, that the common mouth-anal contact of active homosexuals carries "the almost inevitable risk of transfer of bowel pathogens."

A 1979 study of gay men in New York City turned up an infection rate of 39 percent for amebiasis or giardiasis (that was using only a single fecal specimen; three are usually required to be sure of not missing the diagnosis).

Back in 1974 shigellosis began to turn up as a common homosexual infection, first in San Francisco and later in New York, London, and elsewhere. In 1976 physicians at the New York hospital found that 57 percent of cases of shigellosis, not related to foreign travel, were in homosexuals, who made up only 2.5 percent of the patients.

Hepatitis A is also common in homosexuals. Among gay men attending a venereal disease clinic in Seattle there was evidence of previous hepatitis A infection in 30 percent. The yearly attack rate was about 22 percent.

A public health debacle is here in the making. The *New England Journal of Medicine* reported in 1980 that in San Francisco *an average of 10 percent of persons reported as having amebiasis, giardiasis, or shigellosis were employed as food handlers.* Between 60 percent and 70 percent of these persons were homosexuals.

Clearly, homosexuals no more belong in the food-handling business than they do in the blood banks. As Dr. Selma Dritz of the San Francisco Department of Public Health wrote in the *Western Journal of Medicine* in 1982, "special precautions are required to protect the public from [carriers] who work as food handlers, bartenders, attendants in medical care facilities, and as teachers and aides in day-care centers for infants and young children." Common sense suggests that sexually active gays have no business in any of these occupations.

Finally, gonorrhea is also rampant in the homosexual community. In one large survey of U.S. gays, 40 percent reported known infection with gonorrhea. Common homosexual varieties of this disease (oral and rectal) are also more difficult to detect and treat. Antibiotic-resistant gonococci are now making an appearance; the pharmaceutical industry is only about one drug ahead of these strains, and there is no guarantee it will remain so.

Syphilis, an old disease that was in decline, is also making a comeback. In the same gay survey, 13.5 percent reported a previous infection with syphilis. Among gays attending saunas in Amsterdam there was evidence of old or recent syphilis in 34 percent; only half the men were aware of their infection.

It is self-evident that gay sexual practices are an assault upon the ecology of the human body, that the gay communities of America's cities are polluted with disease. With respect to AIDS, there exists a potential for disaster.

The general public has been grossly deceived about the gravity of this homosexually engendered public health menace. Hollywood and the media under the tutelage of the Gay Media Task Force have done their part, portraying gays in programs like "Dynasty" as all-American types with boy-next-door good looks. Of the movie *Partners,* Richard Schickel wrote: "Like all the other pictures, in what looks like a trend . . . it shows homosexuality neutrally, as just another fact one is likely to encounter." Of the movie *Making Love,* he added, "the people who made this picture are determined to prove that 'nice boys' do, that homosexuals can be as well-adjusted and as middle-class as anyone else."

According to *TV Guide,* we can expect to see many more "almost commonplace" gay characters. " 'We're very pleased,' says Chris Uszler, chairperson of the Alliance for Gay Artists . . . 'there are [going to be] more of what we call "happens-to-be-gay" characters.' "

Perhaps so, Chris. Still, one is reminded of the observation of the nineteenth-century historian J.A. Froude: "One lesson, and one lesson only, history may be said to repeat with distinctness [and that is] that the world is built somehow on moral foundations." □

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T. John Jamieson

DRESSED TO KILL: THE CONSERVATIVE EXTERIOR

You can spot a conservative by the raiment.

Plato observed that a democracy is a place where everyone conducts his life exactly as he pleases; hence a democracy tends to exhibit every possible type of human character, and resembles "a garment of many colors, embroidered with all kinds of hues"—a pleasant sight to women and boys. The reference is clearly patronizing. It seems to me that the sartorial image occurred to Plato because he knew that, in a democracy, dress is "optional."

The main culture that the sixties counterculture was countering no longer exists; America is today only an assemblage of subcultures, each having its own richly symbolic dress code to establish its identity before the public. *Homo democraticus americanus* minimizes the time and emotional investment in work and maximizes vacation time and "discretionary income" so that life can revolve completely around some hobby or particular form of sensual indulgence, putting a "bohemian hedge," as Tom Wolfe calls it, between the source of his money and his "authentic self"—and wrapping that self in iconographic costume. "What do you *do*?" It could be wind-surfing, flash-dancing, non-polluting vegetarianism, occidental guru-worship, voluntary pedophilia, sadomasochism, or satanism. We are told that S & M "is rising from the underground—it's becoming street-level"—as tight black leather clothing with studs and spikes is hitting the boutiques. I predict that satanism is about to make a big comeback: Consider the antinomian zeal with which "avowed" sodomites are rushing to get themselves ordained to the priesthood; consider also that, in the modern age, blasphemy may be the last available experience of the numinous. Soon it will be said that satanism "is becoming street-level."

"Our one chance for success in life lies in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time," some new Walter Pater of the American decadence might rise to tell us; "only be sure that the form of enthusiastic activity you choose yields the fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness—and that you can buy clothes and equipment for it." America is mentally under-taxed and morally under-employed.

Successful businessmen are an interesting American subculture; they like to read about themselves in *Forbes.* I recall reading the *Forbes* profile of one old geezer who pontificated, as old geezers are wont to do in their *Forbes* profiles, upon his formula for a "successful" life; one of his admonitions was, "Always try to live like other people." Truly these were words from another age, an age when bourgeois conformism might have

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been a sort of moral safeguard, when people did live like other people, and not living like other people was indeed cause for suspicion of depravity or madness. That was the idea of "respectability"; but, in a climate of cultural pluralism, each little cult presumably defines its own standard of "respectability." Do you care to be a respectable sadomasochist, or a respectable satanist? No, with all due respect to the jolly old boy, I fear he was not a conservative but only an old-fashioned stick-in-the-mud. That isn't to say that stick-in-the-muds do not serve a useful purpose. They can sustain a decent holding action against the cultural revolution if, to begin with, their eyes are open.

Like the ambassador of a deposed monarchy, the true conservative will never openly admit that his civilization, the disestablished establishment, has been reduced to the status of a subculture among the rest. He is perhaps supported in this illusion by the fact that the marketplace has not recognized him as it recognizes the other subcultures, by granting him his own exclusive underground boutique. But I speak too quickly. There is The Decatur Shop, in North Adams, Michigan, where Mr. Don Lipsett sells his invention, the Adam Smith tie—and its sequel, the Edmund Burke tie, conceived possibly for those conservatives with some residual hostility to plutocracy. The Adam Smith tie is the unofficial official tie of the Philadelphia Society, of which Mr. Lipsett is the perpetual secretary. Personally speaking, I prefer Burke to Smith, but I am not about to sport a neckcloth of maroon sprinkled with his micrographic profile in gold; it strikes me as being not so much idolatrous as incomprehensible. When I go to the Philadelphia Society, I wear my Heraldry Society tie, which is sprinkled with crowned lions' heads; someone took the trouble to weave some red silk into the design, so that the lions, "langued gules" (in heraldic parlance), distinctly appear to be sticking their tongues out. I prefer to think that they are sticking their tongues out at the Adam Smiths.

In their day, the scruffy radicals of Bloomsbury used to pepper their socially indignant letters to *The Times* with little digs about the "Old School Tie." Max Beerbohm, whom Rebecca West described as "the last civilized man on earth," was indignant and disgusted at their appearance and politics while staying in that district of London during a brief return from his self-imposed Italian exile. The reactionary impulse brought him to don his Old School Tie for the first time in his life. The colors were bright crimson, salmon pink, and royal blue. "They are dangerous to the appearance of even a quite young man. To that of an old man they are utterly disastrous." Nonetheless, the conservative is prepared to make personal sacrifices in the defense of order.

You can indeed spot a conservative by what he wears; it is especially easy if he's trying to indicate what his little platoon in society is, for then you know that he has one. If he is wearing his kilt, and you have your copy of *The Clans, Septs, and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands* close at hand, you can identify his tartan. Conservatives also wear a lot of interesting lapel insignia; my favorite is Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's tiny Maltese cross—and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta is a pretty good platoon. Without these dead giveaways, it may be less simple to spot a conservative, but it can be done. There are several conservative ideologies of dress, and one can learn to decode them.

If heredity makes you the man your grandfather was, then it also makes you able to wear his clothes.

One of these ideologies states that it doesn't matter what you wear, so long as it was good once. This gave rise to somebody's observation that liberals give their old clothes away to help the poor, while conservatives wear theirs. The conservative does not buy new clothes simply because the fashion has changed or because his wife and children plead with him to try and look like other husbands and daddies. To him, those are two reasons for not buying new clothes. He does not part with old friends for light causes, and his old clothes are old friends indeed. He may think that he is simply being great-souled in his indifference to so small a matter as his appearance, but that is not the case at all. His identity is at stake, the conscious possession of his individual character. No doubt most fashion designers, like most sociologists, who have as much sympathy for human nature as Robespierre, think that you should not have an individual character. Anyway, when the conservative looks in the mirror and sees himself in his threadbare coat and his faded tie, he knows that this man is the same one who looked back at him yesterday, that his beliefs and loyalties are none the worse for wear, and that words will still mean the same thing to him tomorrow that they mean today. He knows he cannot say the same of the people he is likely to face in the street. Above all, he considers the idea that he should wear blazer buttons with the initials of some Parisian couturier whose models look like transvestites—unspeakable.

Needless to say, the conservative gets his clothes made for him, since the mass market would never be able to anticipate his demands. Whereas most customers of a tailor merely order a suit, the conservative dictates one. Nothing can be left to chance; the slightest variation in the width of a cuff or the number of vest pockets could get him confused with somebody he thoroughly despises. Color choices do not interest him much; black is the color of mourning for the *ancien régime,* grey is the color of aristocratic indifference. Material, however, is important: Natural fibers require the subjugation of man and beast. The rest is habit: I believe that I have been wearing three-button coats and waistcoats since I attained the doctrinal age of free will (seven), and I do not intend to change now.

On the other hand, Russell Kirk has been known to wear things that he found in a trunk at Piety Hill. If heredity makes you the man your grandfather was, then it also makes you able to wear his clothes. The morning coats worn in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot are passed from generation to generation and are probably better proof of ancestry than a title, especially in these days when the aristocracy is riddled with recently ennobled political bounders. Of course, the clothes were made better in the old days and are well-nigh indestructible. My oldest Chesterfield (inherited, in truth, through the line of a good friend) dates back to the Hoover era; I had to have it relined, but that is like dropping a new engine into the old Rolls.

The Russell Kirk of nineteenth-century French conservatism was Baudelaire's friend, the ultramontane ultra-royalist Barbey d'Aurevilly. Barbey's version of *The Conservative Mind* was a book called *The Prophets of the Past* and included essays on de Maistre, Bonald, Chateaubriand, and Lammennais. His Mecosta was an ancestral village in Normandy, where he wrote ghost-stories about defrocked priests and counterrevolutionary secret agents. He wore old clothes too, but with a different method to his madness.

The young Kirk's checkered career as a self-styled "Bohemian Tory" no doubt found him in many a checkered coat. The young Barbey, however, was a dandy, an aesthetic reactionary, a sartorial "lion" who literally wore his contempt of the middle classes on his sleeve—with a ruffle and a tautly buttoned glove. The affected dress of the dandy was a defense: Its integrity of taste, its internal logic, was calculated to outrage the bourgeois standard of "respectable" conformism; it was meant to keep people he didn't care to deal with too angry to speak to him. Now Barbey developed his personal costume as a young man in the 1830s; and he adhered to it strictly through all upheavals in fashion and politics until his death in 1889. No doubt he found the baggy trousers of those latter days effeminate and ridiculous, the colors drab and characterless, the abandonment of ruffles an admission of the triumph of democracy, the hard, cylindrical collars and waistless coats rectilinearly representative of the age of *machinisme.* To become a reactionary in a revolutionary age, you need only stand still.

Dandyism is the diametrical opposite of the "bohemian hedge." As of this writing, the closest thing to a dandy among the conservatives is Dr. Thomas Kennerly Wolfe, Jr., vulgarly known as Tom Wolfe, who spoke with an utterly disarming candor of his

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affectations in dress in his 1980 *Rolling Stone* interview. In college he wore black gangster shirts and a hat and always carried an umbrella. In the newspapers, his pretentious *préciosité* was sufficient to get a hardened journalist to call out, whenever he saw Wolfe, "Here comes the man with the double-breasted underwear." "Every effect that one produces gives one an enemy," said Wilde. Dandyism is the unforgivable offense against democracy's cult of informality. "Being natural is simply a pose, and the most irritating pose I know," said Wilde again. "I'm the *only* person who would confess all this to somebody," says Wolfe. "It's really odd, but you can have fun if you're willing to be a bit pretentious. Wear some trick outfits. If it's worth it to you."

It is invariably "worth it" to the true dandy. Where Wolfe fails as one is in his journalistic method. Baudelaire summarized the creed of the dandy as "always to astonish and never to be astonished." The method of Wolfe is to communicate his astonishment to us. Yet the genius of the cheval-glass is still the essence of Wolfe. Anybody can be a fop when he is young, but the true dandy persists to the end. His career ends only with bankruptcy, madness, exile, or mysterious disappearance, but never with old age. Wolfe is already over fifty, and shows no signs of giving up his trade as a clothes-wearing man. His appearance is timeless. In any event, if a man has vanity, and fails to divert it into his wardrobe or his prose style, it may corrupt his moral sense, or prevent him from ever forming one.

John Lukacs confessed to me that in youth he aspired to *le dandysme*; when I met him, he was wearing suede wingtip shoes. These were long ago unpopularized by the Prince of Wales (Edward VIII), on whom they were taken as evidence of an unstable temperament. On the same occasion, I was wearing black and white Oxfords. The unsophisticated thought I was wearing spats, since they had never seen either Oxfords or spats. The legend has followed me unforgivingly —though forgiveness for such a departure from the slovenly and the drab is the last thing I would seek.

Along with ghetto swells and urban cowboys, the conservative is among the last persistent wearers of the hat, though he is much more courteous than the others about removing it. Still, he does not do so without a good reason. One doesn't take off one's hat in a saloon, or, if one is a grandee, in the presence of the King of Spain. (Some British lords are under the impression that they are grandees of some sort too, because they possess very old dispensations allowing their ancestors to remain covered before the sovereign. But it was probably because they had ring-worm.) A monarchist friend of mine had to stop wearing his Carlista red beret out of fear he would be mistaken for one of those vigilantes known as Guardian Angels. A brummagem pretender to the Polish Throne, Count Potocki de Montalk, publisher of the *Right Review,* wore a miniature crown under his beret, and would snatch the hat off at dramatic moments to establish his true identity, doubtless creating the same sensational effect that Clark Kent did whenever he opened his shirt.

It is safe to assume that our age's socialist ideologues masterminded the death of the hat because, sitting atop the head, it obviously represented hierarchy or subordination—a word so dear to Dr. Johnson and so demonic to sociologists. Above all, the top hat had to go. With its sad collapse, the role of counterrevolutionary helmet passed on to the humble billycock or bowler. Every once in a while you see a man wearing one with proper dignity and not as a spitefully degraded addition to bohemian costume. Always it is accompanied by the tightly furled bumbershoot, which is a crypto-walking stick. The walking stick is the reactionary's sceptre of office, a mace with which to call democracy back to order: from the Herculean ivory club of Honoré de Balzac (sole support of his dubious particle), to the swordstick of Chesterton and the malacca of the monocle'd T.S. Eliot. The stick implies the threat of possible use, as when the Baron de Christiani brained the President of France at the Auteuil races for re-opening the Dreyfus case.

No one is going to forget the kilt of James J. Kilpatrick, and I have heard of Dr. Sir Frederick Wilhelmsen lecturing at Hillsdale in the cape of the Order of the Proscribed Legitimacy—with a "leisure suit" underneath. I fear, however, that propinquity to the corridors of power is already exercising a chastening influence upon conservative individualism, and this is tragic. It seems that today's pipe-smoking pretend preppy puppies will only grow up into tomorrow's respectably business-suited policy analysts, without even the wit of a Dr. Franz Pick, who pays his tailor in Krügerrands. The days of the individualists who felt a compelling psychological urge to scandalize the indifferent liberal culture with sartorial sarcasm are probably over. Now that it is easy to be a conservative, it will become boring. □

Matei Calinescu

OUR CENTURY OF GANGSTERS

As Paul Johnson reminds us, the worst of them pillaged in the name of ideology.

Paul Johnson's *Modern Times*[1] is an extraordinary book: a comprehensive narrative history of the contemporary world, and at the same time a sustained and passionate meditation on the meaning of history in general, and of modernity in particular. The book lends itself to philosophical discussion for a simple reason: In our century, the very choice of writing narrative history has become inherently philosophical. Even while recounting in rich detail the events that have directly shaped our world, Johnson is engaged in a larger struggle of ideas.

Modern Times confronts us with perhaps the main challenge of contemporary life: the sheer magnitude of historical events and their consequences, intended or not. Johnson's constant awareness of magnitude runs contrary to the current wisdom that modernity has made the world shrink. The world, we are told *ad nauseam,* is a smaller place: Fast travel has made great distances evaporate; so have our means of instant communication; and, in myriad ways, technology enables us to control space, "save" time, and feel at home in the remotest corners of "spaceship earth." No less banal are the grim views of modernity as an age of alienation, anomie, and decay, in which technological advances do nothing more than speed up the moment of global perdition, the final shrinking of our world into nothingness. In fact, as Johnson stresses again and again, the world has expanded in all dimensions, and so have its problems and tragedies. Faced with awesome magnitude, the mind takes refuge in comfortable abstractions. Our awareness, Arthur Koestler once reflected, is incapable of grasping large processes: "Distance in space and time," he wrote in *The Yogi and the Commissar* (1945), "degrades intensity of awareness. So does magnitude. Seventeen is a figure I know intimately as a friend; fifty billion is just a sound. A dog run over by a car upsets my emotional balance

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[1]Harper & Row, $27.95. *Modern Times* is now available to *American Spectator* readers for half price with a new one-year subscription or renewal. A letter describing this offer was mailed to all subscribers in July. To obtain a copy, send a check for $36.95 ($21 for the subscription, $13.95 for the book, and $2 for postage and handling) to *The American Spectator.*—Ed.

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and digestion; three milllion Jews killed in Poland causes but moderate uneasiness. Statistics don't bleed . . . We are unable to embrace the total process with our awareness; we can only focus on little lumps of reality."

To write a history of the modern world—a history in which statistics do bleed—is an enterprise that defiantly goes against the grain of major trends in modern thought. An immediate obstacle is the crisis in the concept of history itself (i.e., of *narrative* history). In discussing this crisis, Paul Johnson points to one of the most puzzling features of the modern mind: its aversion to facts. From Marxism to neo-Marxism, through "psychohistory" and "cliometrics," to structuralism and, now, post-structuralism, the various modern assaults against history have been united by a common enemy: empirical evidence. Each one of these schools has attempted to theorize facts—the building blocks of the true historian—out of existence, or at least to suppress those facts that do not support its favorite theory.

What might be termed the cultural violence implicit in such attacks on history is merely one expression of a broader and much more troubling cult of violence, in which naked power becomes an end in itself, power for power's sake, a ferocious new divinity. Summarizing one of Johnson's great insights, we can speak, in our century, of an *equation between theory and violence.* As if to underscore this relationship, Johnson begins and ends his book with a discussion of shifts in scientific thought, and of what distinguishes legitimate scientific theories from their widespread misinterpretations, abuses, and perversions.

Given the nearly universally acknowledged correlation between the development of science and the very idea of modernity, it is perfectly legitimate to begin a general history of modern times with considerations of the history and philosophy of science. The first chapter, "A Relativistic World," begins abruptly with this memorable sentence: "The modern world began on 29 May 1919 when photographs of a solar eclipse, taken on the island of Principe off West Africa and at Sobral in Brazil, confirmed the truth of a new theory of the universe." (The theory was Einstein's General Relativity and it was confirmed empirically by the two British astronomers, Arthur Eddington and Frank Dyson.)

As Karl Popper, whom Johnson cites and endorses, insisted, Einstein had "the true scientific attitude" toward his momentous discovery. "What impressed me most," Popper noted, "was Einstein's own clear statement that he would regard his theory as untenable if it should fail in certain tests . . . Here was an attitude utterly different from the dogmatism of Marx, Freud, Adler and even more so of their followers." But even the most genuine scientific theories exert an influence that goes far beyond the rigorous context in which they are formulated, tested, or technologically applied. As Johnson emphasizes, they do more than "change our perception of the world . . . and increase our mastery over it. They change our ideas." And, even when they are decidedly *not* meant to do so, they pose a challenge to our inherited values. In our time, the unprecedented growth of science and spectacular technological breakthroughs have generated a whole new *mythology* of science: a striking example of what Karl Popper calls "the law of unintended consequence," another notion of strategic importance to Paul Johnson's understanding of modern history.

Although Johnson takes Popper as a guide to what constitutes the true scientific attitude, for reasons both

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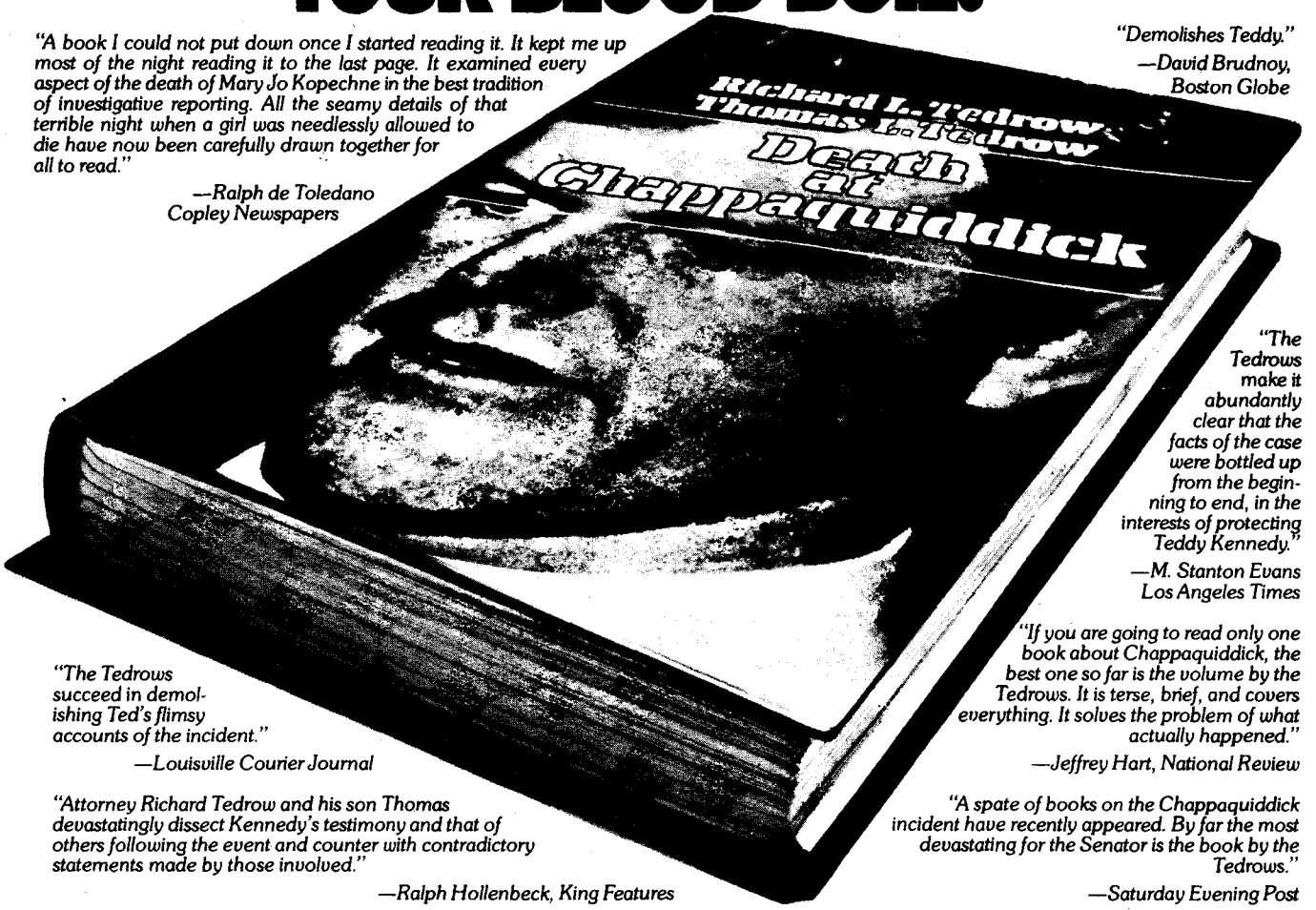

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historical and terminological I would also mention one of Popper's great nineteenth-century precursors, the American philosopher C.S. Peirce. Peirce was probably the first thoroughgoing exponent of self-conscious scientific "fallibilism" (a term he himself coined). Such fallibilism, Peirce thought, far from being an impediment, is in fact one of the very conditions for the growth of scientific knowledge. In total contrast with this approach are the all-purpose general theories that modernity has brought about. They are recognizable by their built-in sense of infallibility, translated into a bizarre kind of dogmatism. This dogmatism can be sustained only by a flexibility of argument verging on sheer incoherence—it is only thus that Marxism, to give an example, manages to render itself irrefutable. We also note that while irrefutability may be a bad thing for science, it certainly is not for the ideological manipulator.

A mythological misunderstanding of Einsteinian relativity is only one in a series of similar distortions of legitimate scientific theories. Paul Johnson writes:

> Newtonian physics formed the framework of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and so helped to bring modern nationalism and revolutionary politics to birth. Darwin's notion of the survival of the fittest was a key element both in the Marxist concept of class warfare and of the racial philosophies that shaped Hitlerism. Indeed the political and social consequences of Darwinian ideas have yet to work themselves out. . . . So, too, the public response to relativity was one of the principal formative influences on the course of twentieth-century history. It formed a knife, inadvertently wielded by its author, to help cut society adrift from its traditional moorings in the faith and morals of Judeo-Christian culture.

It is still a great paradox of our relativistic world that it has presided over the appearance of new ideologies more intolerant—and incalculably more efficient in the exercise of intolerance—than any of the older mainstream religions.

From Marxism to neo-Marxism, through "psychohistory" and "cliometrics," to structuralism and, now, post-structuralism, the various modern assaults against history have been united by a common enemy: empirical evidence.

If there is any religious precedent to the modern drive toward despotic utopias, ruthless experiments in large-scale social engineering, and other forms of the violence of theory, it should be looked for in the history of heresy and fanatic sectarianism. Johnson is right to speak of gnosticism as a distant anticipation of the cast of mind of the most influential "master-thinkers" of our time. With exemplary lucidity he brings out the shared gnostic assumptions of psychoanalysis ("sexual gnosticism"), Marxism ("another form of gnosticism claiming to peer beneath the empirically-perceived veneer of things to the hidden truth"), or, more recently, structuralism, which

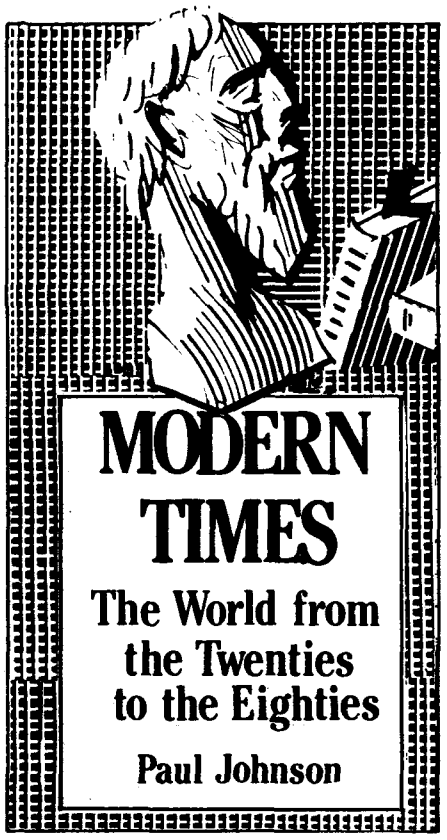
> like the Marxism from which it sprang, was anti-empirical, denying the real world in favour of the theoretical world, discounting facts in favour of 'explanations.' Communists have always been identified by the tendency of facts to get in the way of Marxist theses. One might say that the whole of Stalin's dictatorship had been a campaign against facts. . . . Structuralism, like Marxism, was a form of gnosticism, that is, an arcane system of knowledge, revealed to the elite.

With structuralism on the wane in the late seventies, the main gnostic strains of modernity appear to have all but exhausted themselves. There also are more positive indications that a new, more hopeful era of history may have begun. "During the period 1950-1970," Johnson writes in the concluding chapter, "as the golden age of theoretical physics ended, a new era of biology began." The renewed scientific interest in life as opposed to matter has led to a rediscovery of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, closer to its author's own understanding of what it could and what it could *not* do. Darwin himself knew that his theory was not "a deductive system, permitting prediction of future developments or even the reconstruction of the past." That is why "he gave no license to the theories of the 'Social Darwinists' which terminated in Hitler's holocaust, and why he brushed off Marx's attempts to appropriate Darwinism for his own theories of social determinism, which eventually produced the mass-murders of Stalin, Mao Tse-tung and Pol Pot." The ideas of Darwin, Johnson shows, have started working out their real scientific implications only when such new disciplines as molecular biology, neurphysiology, endocrinology, and others succeeded in explaining, at the micro-level, the mechanisms of genetic programming and inheritance. The development of Darwinian insights at the macro-level, from ethology to sociobiology, has been far more controversial, due in large measure to the power of "Marxist superstition" in intellectual circles.

Modern Times is informed by a highly articulate moral vision, at whose center lies the old recognition of the necessary correlation between ends and means. It is precisely this correlation that has been denied, overtly or covertly, by the various relativistic/dogmatistic doctrines of modernity. And it is solely on the basis of such denial that the main theories of revolutionary violence have been able to claim a "higher morality," in fact, a reverse morality which, as Johnson stresses, could only lead to "the destruction of conscience and all other elements of idealism." On this point, Johnson quotes the "wise and sad old Pole," Joseph Conrad, who wrote in his 1911 novel about revolution in Russia, *Under Western Eyes:* "A violent revolution falls into the hands of narrow-minded fanatics and of tyrannical hypocrites at first. Afterwards comes the turn of all the pretentious intellectual failures of the time. Such are the chiefs and the leaders. . . . Hopes grotesquely betrayed, ideals caricatured—that is the definition of revolutionary success."

Ideals caricatured, and ferociously so—the history of the twentieth century is rich in such examples. For Johnson, the tragic convulsions of our time stem from the erosion and decay of the idea of freedom. Modern utopian attempts to manipulate this idea—another striking illustration of the "law of unintended consequence"—have resulted in widespread political terrorism. That we know, but toward the end of the book Johnson adds: "The experience of the twentieth century shows emphatically that Utopianism is never far from gangsterism." Remarkably, Johnson uses this term not polemically but, I would say, as a category of discovery and definition—in other words, as a heuristic device. "Gangsterism" is the common element of twentieth-century totalitarian politics, whatever their seeming diversity.

Consider the elitist organizing principle that lies at the core of the Leninist theory of the "vanguard" party. It derives from a radical conceptual separation between the (proletarian) mass, whose "class consciousness" always lags behind, and its natural leaders, whose consciousness is far in advance, simply because their sole "occupation is revolutionary activity." Professional revolutionaries, Lenin averred, know not only how to keep a secret, but also how to punish those who betray one: "In order to rid itself of an unworthy member an organization of genuine revolutionaries recoils from nothing." Obviously this was a heresy even from an orthodox Marxist point of view—but a heresy with a future. As Johnson writes: "It was exactly the same heresy which created fascism . . . Benito Mussolini . . . [had] a wide range of political philosophy, which included Nietzsche—he knew all about 'the will to power'—and he was much more broadly read than Lenin. But his political formation was fundamentally Marxist." A new kind of heresy—



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once fascism had replaced the Marxist notion of "exploited classes" with that of "exploited nations"—was responsible for the birth of Hitlerism, in which the Marxian doctrine of class-warfare was changed into that of race-warfare. As Johnson notes: "There is no essential difference between destroying a class and destroying a race. Thus the modern practice of genocide was born."

The three major forms of totalitarianism in our century (Communism, Fascism, and Nazism), as well as their numerous imitations, combinations, and ramifications, have their origin, then, in the professionalization of (revolutionary) politics. Paul Johnson speaks repeatedly of what is perhaps the single most consequential moral-political development in the modern world, indeed "the greatest human scourge of the twentieth century," the emergence of the "full-time professional politician," driven by an obsessive "will to power." Political professionals are all, to a greater or lesser degree, "power addicts" (I borrow the phrase from Malcolm Muggeridge). The metaphor of addiction brings immediately to mind the world of organized crime, a world that is as rigorously brutal and corrupt as the world of "organized revolution." Some parallels have already suggested themselves: the rule of secrecy, the getting rid of "unworthy members." To these should be added: the hierarchical principle, the notion of an overriding "morality of the party," and the (declared or undeclared) legitimacy of violence, indeed its necessity. Thus, the struggle for power within the Bolshevik party after Lenin's death readily lends itself to comparisons with typical gang-wars. As Johnson points out, Trotsky, when he first attacked Stalin in 1923, could only have been dismayed when he "discovered how well-entrenched [Stalin] was. Trotsky wanted the palm without the dust, a fatal mistake for a gangster who could not appeal from the mafia to the public." Again, in the mid-twenties, Stalin was able to "smash up Zinoviev's party apparatus [in Leningrad] and take it over," by employing "essentially the same methods, but on a larger scale, that Al Capone was employing to extend his territory in Chicago at the very same time." (We also recall that before the revolution Stalin/Koba had impressive credentials as an organizer of bank robberies; such operations, termed "expropriations," were among the fund-raising methods used by the party of professional revolutionaries.)

Both Mussolini and Hitler, as political gangsters in their own right, looked at the Bolshevik example with a sense of emulation not diminished by ideological hatred. Thus, by the late 1930s, the stage was set for the extension of gangsterism from domestic to international politics. Immediately preceding the outbreak of World War II, a series of what Johnson calls "gangster pacts" was concluded: the "Pact of Steel" between Hitler and Mussolini; the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of August 1939; and the Soviet-German Frontier and Friendship Treaty of September 28, 1939. The first German-Soviet deal, Johnson comments, brought "the sudden discovery of a community of aims, methods, manners and, above all, of morals. As the tipsy killers lurched about the room, fumblingly hugging each other, they resembled nothing so much as a congregation of rival gangsters, who had fought each other before, and might do so again, but were essentially in the same racket." At the time, Hitler (according to Ribbentrop) held Stalin in great admiration and thought he "had produced 'a sort of Slavonic-Muscovite nationalism' ridding Bolshevism of its Jewish internationalism." Along similar lines, Mussolini believed that Stalin had replaced Bolshevism by "a kind of Slavonic fascism."

For all its usefulness, the gangster model should not obscure the great and obvious difference between totalitarian and mafia-type organizations: ideology. The mafia's ideological claims are—to the degree that such claims are articulated—modestly conformist. This is in sharp contrast to the messianic and millenialist claims of modern totalitarian ideologies, whose immediate consequence is that violence ceases to be a matter of unreflective practice or a sort of rule of thumb and becomes the foundation of revolutionary legitimacy. Hence, alongside the language of utopia, the extensive use of the language of terror. Hence the theoretical need for an Enemy or an ideological version of Satan.

Paul Johnson discusses this latter need at length and more generally the cardinal role that hatred plays in totalitarian doctrines. It was no accident that one of Lenin's favorite words was the verb "to exterminate" and that he consistently described the enemies of revolution in entomological terms (as when, in 1918, he called on the state agencies "to purge the Russian land of all kinds of harmful insects"). Clearly, when you deal with "insects," any considerations of "personal guilt" are out of place: "We are not carrying out a war against individuals," a Soviet official declared after the October 1917 seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, "we are exterminating the bourgeoisie as a class." Johnson comments: "Modern secular faiths needed human devils, and whole categories of them. The enemy, to be plausible, had to be an entire class or race."

Of the modern totalitarian theories, Marxism has obviously been the most successful, in part because of its ability to accommodate in its own terms the basic ingredients of fascism (including nationalism, anti-Semitism, and more generally racism). Its success also stems from its emphasis on secularizing and collectivizing guilt, combined with an extraordinary expertise in manipulating and inflicting a sense of social culpability on segments of the middle classes and particularly the intelligentsia. Thus, to take an example from the 1930s (if not from today), the mere fact of not being "committed" to the cause of social justice—as Marxism defined it—became an almost intolerable source of guilt for many Western intellectuals. Marxism not only was the most convincing type of modern accusatory thought, it also offered a sure way to salvation for all those who were ready to join the forces of revolution.

Many things have changed in recent decades, but the propensity of the intellectuals to feelings of irrational guilt has remained. Nor has the disenchantment of Western progressive opinion with what it labels "really-existing socialism" diminished its deep-seated hatred of capitalism. The Soviet Union is no longer regarded as a model because, contrary to its socialist pretensions, it presumably has become a capitalist country—an instance, to be more precise, of state capitalism. As such, the USSR is not essentially different from its main Western rival, the United States: According to this bizarre and irresponsible logic, both countries are totalitarian, indeed Orwellian societies, and the first duty of American progressive opinion is to expose the evils at home—hate begins at home.

Such reasonings play directly into the hands of totalitarianism as described by Johnson, with its contempt for facts, with its (gnostic) adversary attitude toward evidence, with its rejection of experience in the name of theoretical unreality, with its constitutive hostility to freedom. Its adherents obviously ignore or are unable to acknowledge the fundamental differences between Russia and America; and they stubbornly refuse to see the confrontation between the two for what it is: a confrontation between perfect tyranny and imperfect democracy, between the absolute predominance of an abstract notion—the party or the state—and the rights of the individual.

Paul Johnson's powerful and grim history, up to the very last pages, seems to leave little if any room for hope. So much so, that the encouraging signs he discerns at the end of the book—a possible rediscovery of freedom, a shift in the world of science, a suggestion that a better understanding of the ethic of scientific research might bring about some broader respect for facts and thus inhibit violent theorizing—take the reader by surprise. This surprise is also an opportunity to reflect on the nature of hope. At the end of a century of "grotesquely betrayed hopes," and of his own history of such betrayals, Johnson puts one in a position to discover that hope's awareness of fragility may be its great secret strength. And this may be one of the most subtle and important lessons of *Modern Times*. □

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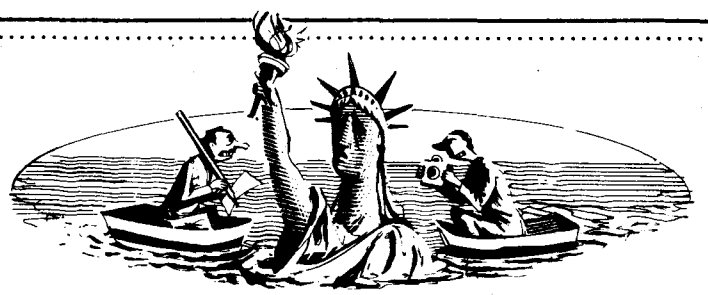

PREMISES, PREMISES

by Fred Barnes

A squad of so-called Soviet religious leaders appeared in the United States last May at the invitation of the National Council of Churches. A month later, the dubious favor of their presence was reciprocated when an NCC delegation trekked through the Soviet Union. As anyone who can tie his shoes would have expected, both groups came to the same, tired conclusion: The United States is responsible for an awful arms race. What might not have been anticipated was the difference in the coverage of the press conferences held by each delegation, the Soviets in Washington, the Americans in Moscow. Not to put too subtle a point on it, but the difference was not in the style of the newspaper pieces; it was in the premise behind the stories. Believe me, premises matter.

The account in the *Washington Post* of what the Soviets said at the end of their visit was written in conventional, matter-of-fact fashion that seemed innocuous enough. "The spokesman for a delegation of 19 Soviet religious leaders winding up a two-week tour of this country said yesterday that world peace could be achieved if the United States would respond to the initiatives of the Soviet Union," it said. " . . . The visit of the group, which included leaders of Baptist, Lutheran and Armenian Apostolic Churches as well as the rabbi of Moscow's Choral Synagogue, was arranged by the National Council of Churches as part of a long-range exchange of visits between U.S. and Soviet churches in pursuit of peace. The group visited 15 cities throughout the country and, on Saturday, joined in a consultation here on peacemaking with U.S. church leaders." To the naked eye, there wasn't much to the *Post* piece. What mattered was the premise, and it was that the Soviet troupe was legit, wholly independent of the Soviet government and earnest in its desire for peace and tranquillity.

Now, turn to the *New York Times* for its story on the American church leaders' session with reporters in Moscow last June, and you find something that is, well, different. "A delegation of 266 American church leaders, the largest such group ever to visit the Soviet Union, today ended a two-week tour of 14 cities with praise for the status of religion in the Soviet Union and condemnation of the United States role in the arms race," it said. "Leaders of the group, sponsored by the National Council of Churches, also voiced irritation that the harmony of their visit had been marred when two demonstrators, demanding religious freedom, held up banners during a Baptist church service. The visit came at a time when the Soviet government has curtailed contacts with the United States. The tour pointed up a growing role assigned to the controlled churches in representing the Soviet Union to the outside world. Russian church figures often speak out on themes, such as the deploying of American missiles in Western Europe, that echo their Government's foreign policy positions. The visit of the Americans drew thousands of words of coverage in the Soviet press, which quoted the visitors as supporting world peace and praising Soviet freedom of religion." The premise of the *Times* story, all but flatly stated, was that the Soviet churchmen (not to mention their American visitors) were something more than unfettered priests infused with yearnings for peace.

In the *Post* story, the premise was naive; in the *Times* piece, it was skeptical. One could call the first liberal and the second conservative, but I wouldn't; most liberals aren't about to accept Soviet church officials at face value. But there are cases, many, many of them, in which a liberal premise lurks behind supposedly objective coverage. The most obvious example, of course, is the treatment of President Reagan's cuts in social spending. Story after story cites the reduction in welfare benefits that some poor devil is suffering, and leaves it at that. The premise is that for every penny in lost government stipend, the welfare recipient is that much worse off. There is never, ever, any cost-benefit analysis in the budget cut stories, the amount of the cut being weighed, say, against the overall benefit that less government spending might bring to society. And heaven forbid, the concept of welfare dependency never intrudes.

Another ubiquitous premise in the minds of journalists is that summit meetings between American Presidents and Soviet leaders are always good.

Never mind the session that John F. Kennedy had with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna in 1961 (a new Berlin crisis ensued). Forget that Dean Rusk, who was Kennedy's Secretary of State, says a summit meeting might have been disastrous at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. Day after day this past June, reporters peppered the White House with questions about a possible summit, questions premised on the notion that Reagan's opposition to a summit was wrong. And when Reagan said at his June press conference that he was willing to convene one, the press responded enthusiastically. "The need for change was manifest," said *Newsweek*.

Jesse Jackson also got a break from many reporters who wrote about his challenge to the Democratic presidential delegation selection rules. Their stories reflected acceptance of the premise that one-man, one-vote should prevail in delegate selection. It doesn't in presidential primaries and caucuses, and it isn't supposed to. Nor does it in presidential elections (remember the electoral college?). And some delegates—congressmen, governors, state chairmen—don't have to be elected at all. Yet a front-page piece in the *New York Times* at the end of the primary season concluded that Jackson had been "penalized" because of this system. With delegates elected at the district level, he suffered the "disadvantage" of having too many delegates in one district, not enough in another, the *Times* said. Jackson got 17 percent of the vote and 9 percent of the delegates, the *Times* noted. That amounts to injustice, especially if your premise was that proportional representation should reign.

• • •

No matter how flagrant the assault and battery on the President by the press, the idea lingers in the journalistic mind that somehow, some way, through a process that is both mysterious and sinister, the guy in the White House is manipulating his

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coverage. Lyndon B. Johnson quits after a single elected term, Richard M. Nixon is driven to resigning, Gerald R. Ford suffers rejection in his bid for a full White House term, Jimmy Carter is humiliatingly exiled to Plains—still, the notion persists among reporters that manipulation is rampant.

Now the whole manipulation myth has been packaged in a book by Joseph C. Spear,[1] who happens to be one of the country's best investigative reporters—but not a great analyst of how Presidents fare with the press. "Future historians of the presidential-press relationships will surely regard the decade of the 1970s as epochal," he writes. "During this period the chief executives virtually mastered the media." Richard Nixon did this? Gerald Ford? Jimmy Carter? If so, they must have done it after they were routed from the Oval Office.

What Spear finds to be manipulative is the simple effort, followed not only by all politicians but by nearly every member of the human race, to put one's best face forward. How do Presidents do this? Well, for one thing, they have their aides shower press kits on newspapers and TV stations in the hinterlands, press kits that are most likely filed in the trash can rather than perused reverentially. This practice is "the most ambitious public relations machine ever assembled for a President." For another, they conduct regional press conferences at which yahoo local reporters, not super-knowledgeable Washington types, get to ask questions. And so on.

Like most Washington reporters, Spear can't see the forest for the trees. Sure, Presidents would like to manipulate the press; unctuous aides whisper to them that it's easy. But the fact is, manipulation doesn't work. If it did, President Reagan wouldn't have been forced to back off from his plan to bar the disclosure for all time of any classified information learned by minions in his administration; yowls from the press caused the retreat. If manipulation did work, Reagan wouldn't be President at all, Carter would be. And then Spear's book might make sense.

• • •

The thought that an adversarial press might have made D-Day a far hairier—and maybe abortive—operation than it was occurred to more folks than just me. One of them was R. James Woolsey, an undersecretary of the Navy in the Carter Administration, a stalwart of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, and a man who would make a brilliant Defense Secretary. Woolsey jotted down a mock story on how D-Day might be covered by today's reporters, and it was published in June on the op-ed page of the *Washington Post*. The satirical piece, under the headline "General With Roving Eye Loses 10,000 Troops in France," was both enormously witty and extraordinarily telling.

"Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, rumored to be romantically involved with his 'driver,' Kay Summersby, ordered an invasion of Normandy in the early morning hours yesterday," it began. "American casualties, many as a consequence of drownings in landing craft in the storm-tossed Normandy surf—about which the general had been warned—are thought to be among the highest for any single day of military operations since the Civil War. Reliable sources in Eisenhower headquarters have revealed that in the middle of the night he disregarded pessimistic weather predictions and overrode the objections of several subordinates in ordering the June 6 attack, which included an assault by Army Rangers on a German gun position atop a 100-foot sheer cliff, an operation described by a staff aide as 'a crazy gamble that was bound to get somebody badly hurt.'"

The Woolsey satire was full of nice touches. For example: "The possible role of Miss Summersby in the general's late-night invasion decision is not known. Miss Summersby could not be reached for comment." Or: "In another major Washington development, first-term Republican Congressman Buford Grundge, prominent critic of American involvement in the arms race, which led to the current hostilities, and of the unpopular aid program to a British government involved in such controversial human rights practices as massive wartime relocation of children, has called for a major investigation of Army procurement." Or: "In New York, in another development, ACLU President Garrison O. Pugh charged today that there was massive deception involved in planning for the Normandy operation. 'Military duplicity and secrecy led the American people to believe that this invasion would probably occur at Pas de Calais, not Normandy,' said Pugh. 'There are significant constitutional issues here.'" □

[1] *Presidents and the Press*, MIT Press, $25.00.

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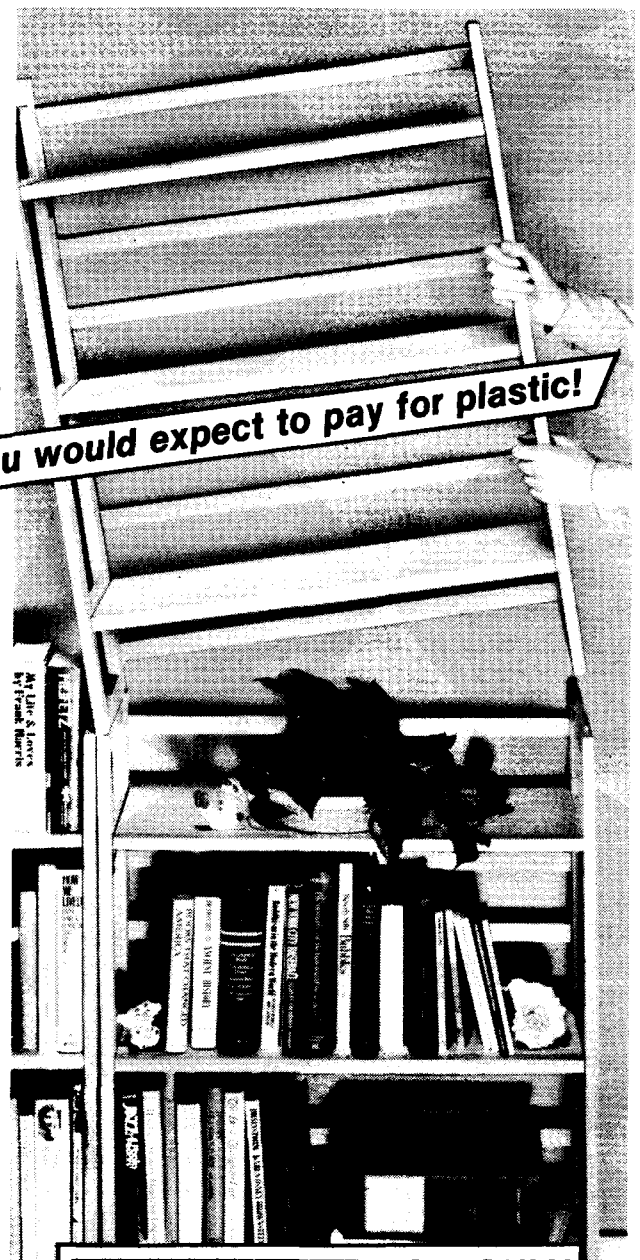

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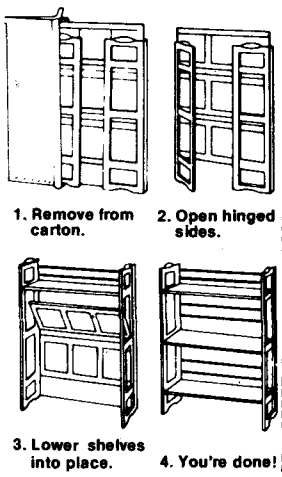

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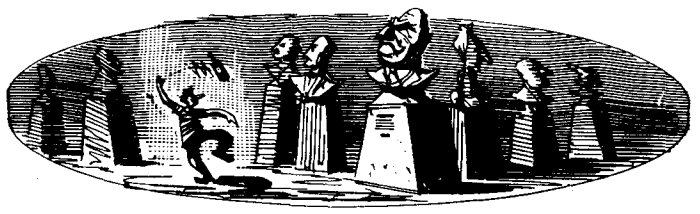


SYRIA'S HOWLING JACKALS

by Micah Morrison

Consider the dictator of Damascus. At the moment of his greatest success—central Lebanon a puppet state under his control, superpower America and its European allies driven from Beirut, the U.S.-backed Lebanese-Israeli peace treaty demolished at his bidding, billions of dollars worth of the most advanced Soviet weaponry pouring into his country, his star rising in the Arab world—at this moment, his body fails him. He is briefly hospitalized for heart trouble and, according to sources in the capital, his health continues to decline. The assorted jackals that have fed off his power for years smell blood and deploy their militias at strategic points in the city. Long ago the dictator made sure that no one man commanded enough force to overthrow him; now his lieutenants are gearing up for a bloody succession battle. Shots are heard near the presidential palace. The dictator summons the jackals—most of them are his relatives—and calms the situation. But for how long?

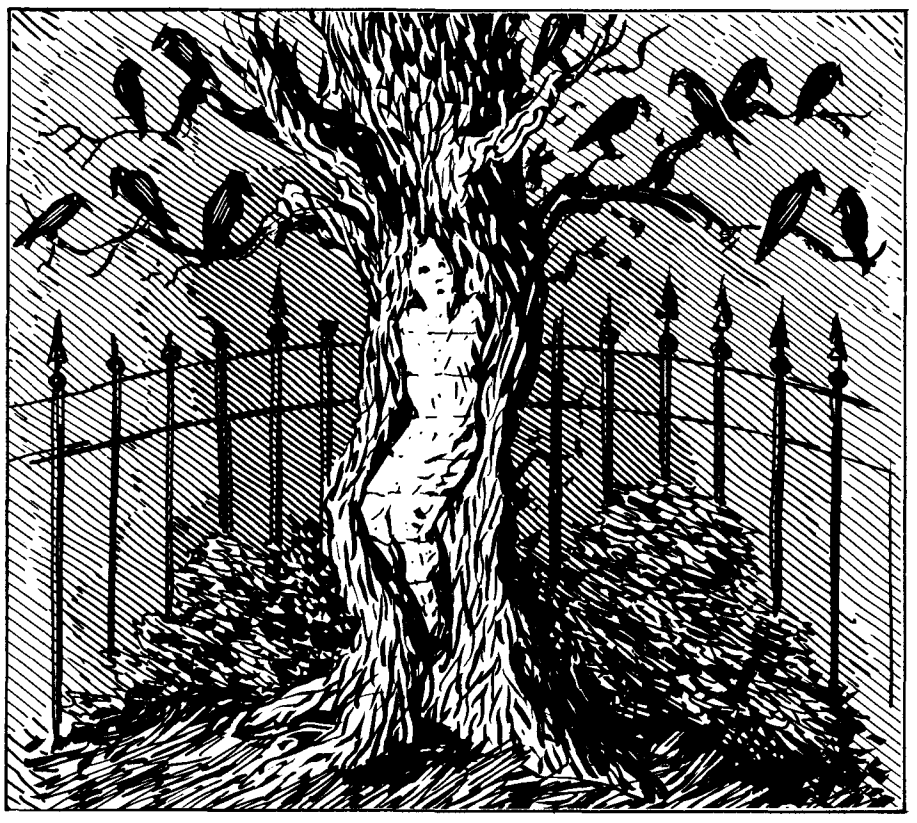
As his health fades, power slips from his grasp. If he has any sense of history, perhaps he sees history repeating itself, sees Syria beginning to slide back to the chaos of coup and counter-coup that existed before he seized power fourteen years ago and instituted a quiet and very effective reign of terror.

President Hafez al-Assad, the ailing dictator of Syria, described by various journalists and diplomats as taciturn, reclusive, a lover of military pomp, a career soldier in presidential clothes, a prudent manager, a "details man" immersed in every aspect of power, cunning, cruel, self-reliant and shrewd, austere and unforgiving. Yet Assad remains something of an enigma, turning a stern but kindly Janus face to the occasional media star graced with an interview while the jailing, torture, and assassination of thousands of his opponents goes for the most part unreported. And even if the reports of his imminent demise are true, the news is not necessarily good: Whoever replaces him will probably be worse.

Consider the alternatives. There is Rifaat al-Assad, the president's brother, a graduate of Moscow University, one of the three new vice-presidents recently appointed by Assad in an effort to ease his workload and placate the jackals. Rifaat is the chief contender for power. He commands the 25,000-strong Defense Companies guarding the capital. In 1982 it was the Defense Companies that crushed an uprising of the Moslem Brotherhood, a Sunni Moslem fundamentalist movement opposed to Assad's rule, in the city of Hama. According to some reports, as many as ten thousand civilians were killed. The Defense Companies answer only to Rifaat, who is viewed by most Syrians, including many in the top circle of power, as a hopelessly corrupt figure. He is reportedly involved in hashish and heroin deals stretching from Pakistan to Europe, extortion, gun running, and terrorism. The Islamic Jihad terror group, said to be behind last October's attack on U.S. Marine headquarters in Beirut that killed 241 Americans, trained on bases in Lebanon's Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley under the command of Rifaat's men.

The other two new vice-presidents, Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam and a functionary of the governing Ba'ath party, Zuhair Musharqa, do not command troops and can be counted out of the running for real power. Rifaat has many rivals, and not a few allies, in the murky world of Syrian military politics. Today's rival may be tomorrow's ally, or, as the Arab saying has it, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." Among the soldiers who will decide Syria's future are:

- Ali Haidar, Rifaat's brother-in-law and leader of the elite Special Forces.
- Ali Douba, head of the Department of Internal Security, a main prop of the Assad regime. (Other reports say Douba is head of Military Intelligence.)
- Shafiq Fayyad, commander of the Third Armored Division. Also a brother-in-law of Rifaat.
- Hikmat Shehabi, Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army.
- Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas.
- Jamil Assad, brother of Hafez and Rifaat, commander of some troops in the Damascus area.
- Adnan Assad, an Assad cousin, commander of the Struggle Companies protecting government buildings in Damascus.
- Adnan Makhluf, brother-in-law of Hafez Assad, commander of the Presidential Guard.
- Ali Aslan, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army, more powerful than Hikmat Shehabi because of clan ties to the Assad family.
- Muhammed Khuli, chief adviser to Hafez Assad on intelligence and security.
- Ali Saleh, chief of the Air Force.
- Wazid Knaan, an Assad cousin, head of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon.



Hafez Assad and most of his cohorts are Alawite Moslems. Only two of the twelve key figures noted above are not Alawites: Tlas and Shehabi. They are Sunni Moslems and have little influence within the Alawite inner circle. The Alawites form about eleven percent of the Syrian population; the Sunnis seventy percent. One might detect a bit of a persecution complex, or at least a healthy dose of historical paranoia, among the ruling minority Alawites who, according to a landmark legal judgment passed down by a fourteenth-century Islamic jurist, are to be regarded as "more infidel than the Jews or the Christians . . . more infidel than most idolators. The harm they have done the religion of Muhammed is greater than that done by belligerent infidels, Turks, Franks, and others."

Fortunately for the infidel Alawites, after the French grant of independence in 1946 the majority Sunnis were so busy fighting among themselves that they did not give serious thought to

Micah Morrison is a free-lance writer based in Jerusalem.

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slaughtering the Alawites. Before leaving Syria the French had brought many Alawites into the army. After independence, civil power rested largely with the Sunnis. Although the Sunnis did have some support in the army, their military and political power was decimated by infighting, factional purges, and the numerous coups that shook Syria between 1946 and 1963. As Sunni power declined, Alawite influence rose.

Hafez al-Assad was sixteen when the French left Syria. He grew up on a farm near the Mediterranean port of Latakia, a provincial youth from a minority religious sect. After studying science at the Latakia Secondary School, Assad enrolled in the Homs Military College. For the Alawites, rural and poor, military service was practically the only way to get off the farm and move up in Sunni-dominated society. Assad later went to a military air academy, was sent to the Soviet Union in 1958 for special training in night combat, and the following year was posted to Cairo as a squadron leader in the air force of the United Arab Republic, a short-lived merger of Egypt and Syria under the strong hand of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. In Egypt Assad became the leader of a clandestine group of Syrian officers known as the Military Committee.

The Military Committee was allied with a growing force in Syrian politics, the Ba'ath (Arab Socialist Renaissance) party, founded in 1940 by a Damascus intellectual, Michel Aflag. Ba'ath rhetoric called for a secular socialism, the unity of the Arabs as "one nation," and recalled a time when Damascus dominated the Arab world. This was the time of the Umayyad Dynasty, which from 661 to 750 A.D. pushed the Arab empire into North Africa, Spain, and Afghanistan. The Umayyad legend would later play a part in Assad's plans for Syrian rule over Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel.

Michel Aflag's rhetorical skills are said to have stirred many a young Syrian heart. "Love, O young man, before everything," Aflag wrote in his 1940 essay "Toward the Ba'ath," a flowery hunk of writing that equated love with nationalism and alluded to times of Umayyad greatness. "Love is the soil in which your nationalism is nourished . . . Nationalism is racial in the sense we hold sacred this Arab race which has, since the earliest historical epochs, carried within it a vitality and nobility . . . " Dreams of dynasty aside, the Ba'ath and the Syrian Communist party were the only two parties in Syria with efficient organizations, and their power grew fast.

In 1963 the Military Committee helped topple the Syrian government and the Ba'ath took over. Assad was given command of the Syrian Air Force and a division of troops. The provincial Alawite was now a major player in the Syrian power game. Ba'ath theories of social unity were fine in principle, but in reality Assad knew he could trust only his kinsmen, and even they were not always dependable. Seventeen years of instability and continual coups had taught Assad not to place too much trust in anybody, to make sure one's allies had power, but not too much power. He began to ease more Alawites into key positions in the armed forces. Disputes soon developed among the Ba'ath rulers and another successful coup was staged in 1966. Again Assad was on the winning side. He was rewarded with the Ministry of Defense, and retained direct control of the Air Force.

As leader of Syria's military forces, Assad saw his personal and political standing dealt a near fatal blow in the 1967 Six-Day War with Israel. His army behaved poorly, two-thirds of the Syrian Air Force was destroyed on the ground, Israel took the Golan Heights, and Assad, humiliated, later said he held himself "personally responsible" for the defeat. Israel, always a bone in the Arab throat, now choked his own

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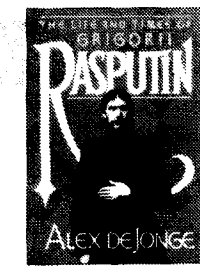

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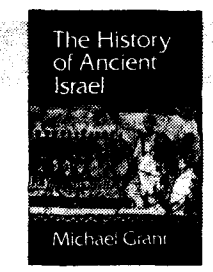

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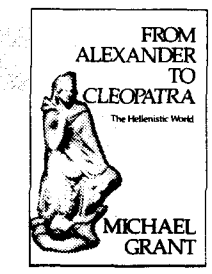

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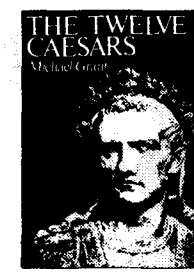

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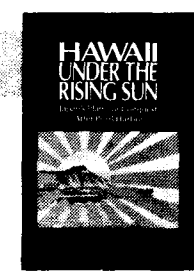

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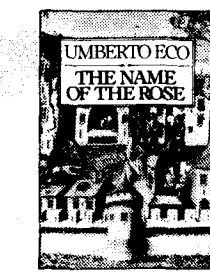

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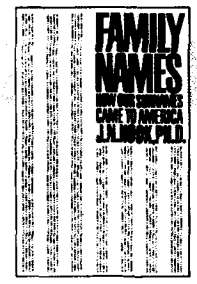

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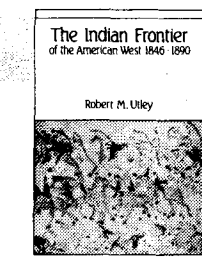

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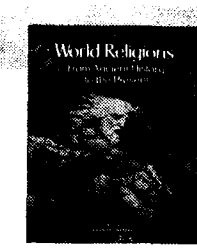

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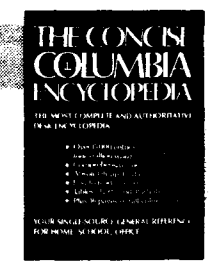

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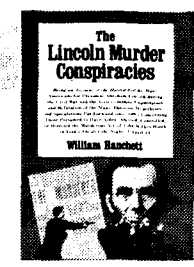

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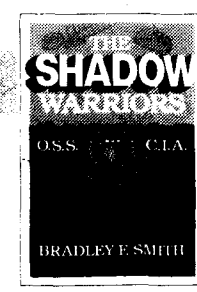

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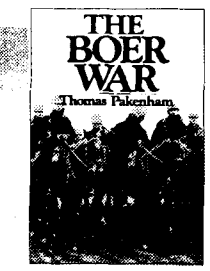

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future. He was finished unless he could avenge the defeat. Most disgraced Syrian politicians are not allowed to fade quietly away; execution or assassination are the favored forms of retirement.

Yet Assad survived, and prospered. Within the Ba'ath leadership another power struggle was taking shape, and this probably worked to Assad's benefit by deflecting attention from his 1967 failure. In 1970, aided by his Alawite brethren and allies from the Military Committee, he overthrew President Nurudin Atassi and took control of the country. The period of coups and counter-coups ended as his security forces began a purge of real and imagined enemies which has lasted fourteen years.

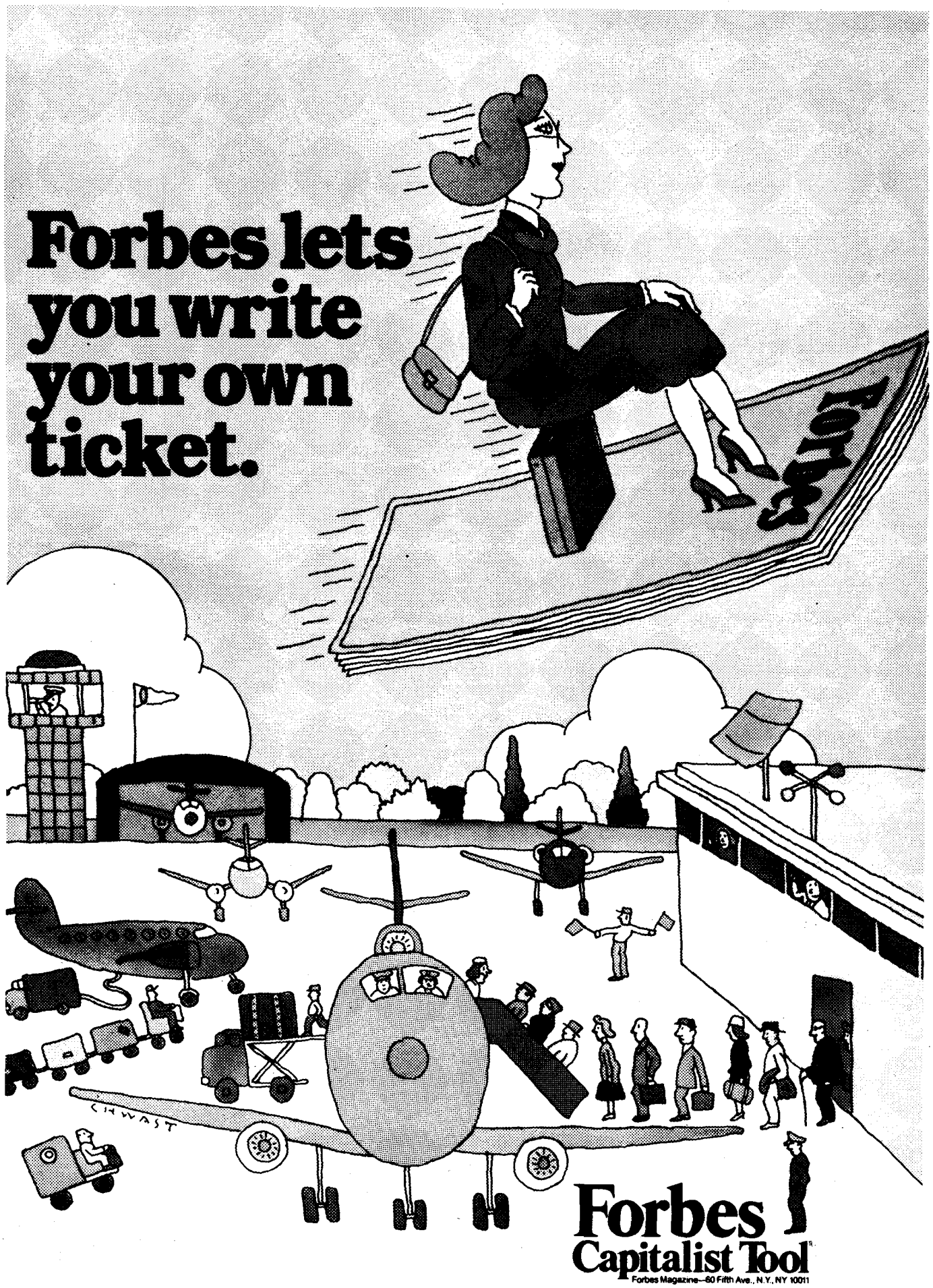
Assad's longevity is not due only to his control of the military: He came to be an effective politician, too. He installed Sunnis in prominent though politically weak positions in government, fostering the image of a broad base of support. Russian economic and military aid brought a period of mild prosperity to the country. He also made an attempt to reduce his stigma as an heretical Alawite. As Professor Mordechai Nissan of the Hebrew University has noted, Assad forced Damascus's chief religious leader to issue a statement saying Assad was a "true Moslem"; later, Assad would have the head of Shi'a Islam in Lebanon declare him a "full Shi'ite."

In 1973 Assad won a psychological victory over Israel in the Yom Kippur War. In a surprise attack his troops pushed the Israelis off most of the Golan Heights for a few days; Israel retook the Heights, but Assad's personal humiliation was to a large degree erased, at the cost of 3,500 Syrian lives. The Israelis learned a new respect for the Syrian forces, which did not panic and run as in earlier wars. The Syrians rallied around their leader, and the government-controlled media extolled Assad and the Syrian troops, concealing the magnitude of Israel's final victories in the war. Assad further consolidated his power and prestige when Syria took a hard-line position on non-negotiations with Israel. After Anwar Sadat made his separate peace with Israel, a move that shocked and outraged the Arab world, Assad put Syria into a leading position of uncompromising enmity against the Jewish state. This gave the Syrian people a sense of being at the forefront of the Arab struggle and won Assad much support at home and in the Soviet Union.

In 1976 he ordered the invasion of Lebanon, ostensibly to end a civil war in that unfortunate country. Officials in Damascus justified the invasion by saying Syria had been "invited" in by an organization called "the Vanguard of the Lebanese Army." The Associated Press reported from Damascus at the time of the invasion that the "organization has never been heard of before . . . There is no indication of its size, who its leaders are or where it is based."

The organization, and the invasion, were in fact based on Assad's designs for a "Greater Syria," a historical delusion of megalomaniacal proportions, rooted in the legends of the Umayyad Dynasty and combined in this century with Ba'ath and Nasserist notions of pan-Arab unity. Syria also claims that Lebanon was unfairly expanded to its present borders by France in 1920, taking four provinces out of Damascus's control. In practical terms, the Greater Syria concept is an ideological vehicle for Assad's expansionist aims.

Shortly after the 1976 invasion, Assad made his thoughts on Lebanese sovereignty clear. "Historically," he said in a Radio Damascus interview, "Syria and Lebanon are one country." Although Assad has lately become more circumspect in regard to Greater Syria delusions of grandeur, he did slip



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up on one notable occasion in 1974 when, referring chiefly to Israel but also to parts of Jordan, he declared that "Palestine is none other than the principal part of southern Syria."

With the recent establishment of Rasheed Karameh as prime minister of Lebanon, Damascus now calls all the shots in Beirut. Only the Israeli presence in southern Lebanon keeps Assad from dominating all of the Land of the Cedars. Yet Karameh is already having troubles holding his cabinet together, and the Syrian success in Lebanon is only a military one. Contrary to some wishful reports in the American and Western media, Assad has no desire to bring stability to Lebanon, if stability means political independence for the Lebanese. For with a modicum of political independence the Lebanese would turn on their Syrian masters. The fighting continues in Beirut, the sniping and the bombing, and by keeping the Lebanese people off balance and exhausted by war, the Syrians ensure their dominance.

Assad's military success in Lebanon has clearly pleased the Russians, who depend on Syria to advance Moscow's aims in the region. The American withdrawal from Beirut might be seen as a textbook case of the Soviet Union's use of surrogate forces to increase instability and weaken American influence. In this instance, the Syrians, the remnants of the PLO in Lebanon, the Lebanese Druse, and Shi'ite militias all briefly united against the American forces. By the time the Marines pulled out, a nasty little local conflict had been turned into a major military and propaganda victory for Syria and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet use of Syria and Syrian-controlled Lebanon as a training ground for political terrorism is not a new development. There are close ties between Damascus and Soviet-supported groups, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Somalia, and the Marxist Tamil United Liberation Front (Sri Lanka)—all of which are trying to overthrow pro-West governments. Syria frequently hosts visits from such Soviet allies as Cuba, Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, North Korea, and North Yemen. Many of the terrorist training bases destroyed by Israel during the Lebanon war have been restored in Syrian-controlled territory. Recent reports in the Lebanese press say that the Red Brigades, the Red Army, Baader Meinhoff, the Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, and other unidentified terror groups are currently being trained in Bekaa Valley bases under the instruction of Soviet, East German, and Cuban teachers.

Moscow has big plans for Syria. Strategic cooperation intensified after the signing of a friendship treaty in 1980 which, according to some intelligence reports, includes secret clauses giving the Soviet Union the option to use the Mediterranean port of Latakia and two Syrian air bases. And since that embarrassing day early in the Lebanon war when Israeli jets destroyed almost a hundred Soviet-supplied Syrian MiG fighter planes, Russia has put an estimated $2.5 billion worth of arms into Syria, including top-line surface-to-air missiles, a sophisticated air defense system, radar-controlled anti-aircraft guns, tanks, helicopters, and advanced MiGs. In addition, the Russians maintain about 7,000 "advisers" in the Syrian armed forces and have laid extensive arms depots. Combined, the "advisers," the arms depots, and the air and port facilities could serve as a forward base for the Soviet Union, should it decide to intervene directly in any future Middle East conflict. The surface-to-air missile bases, which are manned by Russian crews, are an especially worrisome point to Western and Israeli military planners. Missile bases in northern Syria have a range extending over the main NATO base in eastern Turkey, and missiles based in other parts of Syria and Lebanon can reach Israel's major cities.

If Assad is as ill as reports indicate, it is perhaps the Russians who will mourn his passing most of all. They have the most to lose. He has been a loyal friend of the Soviet Union. The Lebanese will not mourn him, although with his passing they will fear for the future of their country; with Assad gone, his enemies in Lebanon may sense a weakening of Syria's Lebanese allies, and escalate the civil war again.

The Israelis, curiously enough, may briefly rue his demise, working on the theory that the devil you know is better than the one you don't. But the Israeli experience with Assad has been a bitter one. Israeli prisoners of war have been tortured, mutilated, and killed by Syrian troops. If Assad dies suddenly, there may be an outbreak of fighting in Damascus. Internal battles in Arab countries usually work to Israel's benefit because they distract attention away from Israel; the danger is that the internal forces may trigger a war with Israel in an effort to unify their country against the hated Jews. And in the Syrian scenario, there is the danger that one or another internal faction may call on the Russians to aid them, drawing the Middle East closer to a superpower conflict.

The United States, which never got much succor from Hafez al-Assad, should not mourn his demise, and it should not look for much in the way of cooperation and moderation from whoever claws his way to the top of the Syrian heap. A virulent anti-American propaganda campaign is sure to accompany any Syrian power struggle. Syria is one Middle East arena where America has little influence, and it should recognize this fact and bide its time. But the Reagan Administration, which seems to have been badly scarred by its Lebanese misadventure, should also recognize that a strong American presence in the Middle East is in the long run the only hope for peace. While Russian power is respected and feared by the peoples of the area, it is American culture and technology that is making inroads. By the restrained but forceful demonstration of an American military presence, such as improved defense ties with Israel, and by the intelligent use of economic aid, such as programs that would build links between Israel and moderate Arab countries, the United States can regain some of the influence it lost due to miscalculations in Lebanon. Any U.S. move to force an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, which Israel considers a vital strategic interest guarding its eastern flank, would run counter to Israeli-American strategic cooperation.

In Syria, Assad's death is likely to cause chaos. The Moslem Brotherhood, the chief target of Assad's terror, will certainly not mourn him, and may rise up in revolt. Nor will Syria's Sunni majority mourn him. Nor will the countless thousands who, according to sketchy reports obtained by Amnesty International, have been tortured in soundproof rooms, had their fingernails ripped out, were whipped with braided copper cables and caned and beaten, had electric skewers jammed into their rectums, and were forced to watch while their relatives were sexually assaulted. The relatives of the hundreds of prisoners massacred at Palmyra Prison in 1980 will not mourn him. Nor will the relatives of the thousands killed at Hama in 1982.

Even Rifaat al-Assad and the other contenders for power will not mourn Hafez al-Assad for long. They are already plotting to succeed him, new purges and battles are in the making. Brutality and xenophobia are the distinguishing features of Hafez Assad's rule; in the man himself, these qualities are thinly lacquered with a veneer of disingenuous simplicity. His successors will probably not have time for such dissembling. Rifaat, for instance, is said by some Western political observers to "tilt to the Saudis" and thus be "pro-American." But Rifaat has recently been strengthening his personal ties with the Soviet leadership, and America would be wise not to place too much hope in a man so hated in Syria. For the jackals are beginning to howl in Damascus, and when Hafez Assad goes to his dubious reward Rifaat may not be far behind. □

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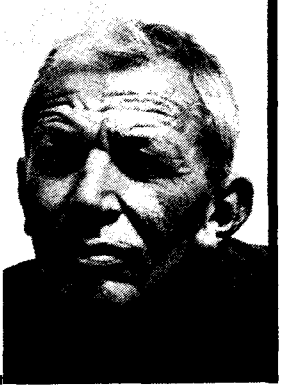
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QUOTA QUASHING

by Herman Belz

The Supreme Court's recent decision in *Firefighters Local Union No. 1784* v. *Stotts* is the most significant affirmative action ruling since the *Weber* case gave broad approval to quotas in 1979. In holding that a district court may not order the city of Memphis to lay off white workers to maintain the minority hiring percentages required by an affirmative action plan, the Court has for the first time called a halt to the spread of racial quotas.

Reaction to the Memphis decision has ranged from Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds's sanguine prediction that it will abolish all racial quotas, to the insistence of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and other liberal groups that it will merely settle future controversies involving layoffs under affirmative action programs. In fact the Court's ruling has relevance going far beyond the scope of the case itself. It is not too much to say that the decision has the potential for reforming national civil rights policy. To understand how this might happen it is necessary to examine the Court's opinion in the context of existing antidiscrimination law and policy.

In flagrant contradiction of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, quotas and racial preference exist by judicial fiat and administrative decree in over 325,000 businesses and institutions employing millions of American workers. Where not the product of judicial legislation, quotas are the result of agreements between employers and complainants that are legally regarded as private and voluntary, but are in fact required by courts and the civil rights bureaucracy under threat of costly Title VII discrimination charges.

As the structure of affirmative action has been built up by reciprocal efforts of courts and administrative agencies, it is the Supreme Court that has provided the appearance of legal validity and constitutional legitimacy. Entirely within the tenure of conservative Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, the Court has transformed individual equal opportunity into racial group entitlement aimed at equality of result. It has said that illegal discrimination could be proved by showing racial imbalance rather than acts of deliberate and intentional discrimination (*Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.*, 1971); sanctioned class action judgments benefiting members of racial groups who have not been discriminated against (*Albemarle Paper Co.* v. *Moody,* 1975); approved race as a legitimate factor in university and professional school admission decisions (*Bakke,* 1978); permitted Congress to award public works contracts exclusively to specified racial groups (*Fullilove* v. *Klutznick,* 1980); and upheld so-called private and voluntary racial quotas as consistent with the purposes of the Civil Rights Act (*Weber,* 1979).

Yet the Supreme Court has always held back from giving unequivocal support to the two principal methods by which quotas have been imposed on public and private employers: federal court orders and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations enforcing Title VII, and guidelines of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and other executive agencies which have forced government contractors and recipients of federal funds to adopt preferential treatment. At most the Court has chosen not to disturb lower court decisions requiring quotas or approving executive agency quota stipulations. This unwillingness to defend quotas explicitly has been an Achilles' heel in affirmative action policy, and a continuing source of encouragement to its critics. Hence the enormous significance of the Memphis case: The Supreme Court, in its first formal review of a government-mandated quota plan, has decided *against* preferential treatment.

In rejecting quotas, the Court in the Memphis decision has also resolved much of the intellectual and moral confusion concerning the basic purpose of federal antidiscrimination law. For years the Court has carried water on both shoulders in addressing this question, trying to balance the demand for racial preference with the principle of racially impartial individual rights. In *Weber,* for example, Justice Brennan said for the Court that the purpose of Title VII was to promote the economic interests of blacks as a group. In *Connecticut* v. *Teal* (1982), on the other hand, Brennan's majority opinion declared the Civil Rights Act was intended to protect the rights of individuals. In the former case the Court rejected a white worker's claim of reverse discrimination; in the latter it upheld blacks' charges of discrimination against an employer who, though using a test that had an adverse impact on minorities, had hired the requisite number of minorities in accordance with an affirmative action plan. After *Teal* it appeared the Court either was deciding cases simply on the basis of racial favoritism, or was hopelessly confused about the purpose of the Civil Rights Act.

Now thanks to the majority opinion of Justice Byron R. White in the Memphis case, we have much needed and one hopes conclusive clarification of this fundamental question. Justice White states that the purpose of Title

Herman Belz teaches history at the University of Maryland.

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VII "is to provide make-whole relief only to those who have been actual victims of illegal discrimination." Of course the conflict in Memphis between the layoff procedure specified by a seniority system and a quota hiring agreement is one that occurs infrequently and affects small numbers of workers. But in no way is the individual rights conception of Title VII relief for discriminatory treatment limited only to this sort of case, as defenders of quotas have asserted. On the contrary, White is concerned to express the general principle illustrated by the case: "Mere membership in the disadvantaged class is insufficient to warrant a seniority award; each individual must prove that the discriminatory practice had an impact on him."

Moreover Justice White introduces extensive portions of legislative history to support his view of Title VII. He quotes from Hubert Humphrey's statement that nothing in Title VII gives any court or government agency the power "to require . . . firing . . . of employees in order to meet a racial 'quota' or to achieve a certain racial balance." He also cites the interpretive memorandum placed in the *Congressional Record* by Senators Clark and Case explaining that courts are not authorized to give preferential treatment to persons who have not been discriminated against. These documents, staples of the antiquota argument, were highlighted in Justice Rehnquist's withering dissent in *Weber* and have been repeatedly submitted in Justice Department amicus briefs opposing quota hiring and promotion orders. Their appearance now in a majority opinion written by the centrist Democrat White tells much about the internal dynamics on the Court which produced this antiquota ruling.

Against Justice White's argument from original congressional intent, Justice Blackmun's dissenting opinion lamely asserts that there is authority that supports a different view of Title VII. This authority turns out to be nothing more than subsequent lower court opinions and law review treatises. Blackmun further offers the non sequitur that limitation of remedial action under Title VII to cases of individual discrimination because of race "is no indication whatever that the amendment was intended to broaden its prohibition to include all forms of prospective race-conscious relief." This amounts to a confession that the policy of racial preference has no legitimate foundation in congressional history.

What has perhaps most alarmed defenders of affirmative action is that the Memphis decision has struck at the judicial power which has been the principal source and sanction of quotas. Justice White makes unmistakably clear the majority's belief that federal courts, in their exercise of remedial authority under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, should be governed by an individual rights view of Title VII. He states that the policy of Title VII—that the beneficiaries of court orders must have been the actual victims of illegal discrimination—"affects the remedies available in Title VII litigation." Again the point is that the circumstances of the Memphis case are less important than the general principle that it evokes. The Justice Department has argued in numerous cases involving hiring quotas that courts lack the authority to order specific affirmative relief for persons who are not the actual victims of unlawful discrimination practices. After several rebuffs by the Supreme Court, the Department can take satisfaction in the justices' acceptance of its narrow view of judicial remedial authority.

But stating that courts in Title VII litigation are bound by the policy of Title VII does not mean that the Memphis decision will automatically dismantle race-conscious affirmative

The Wall

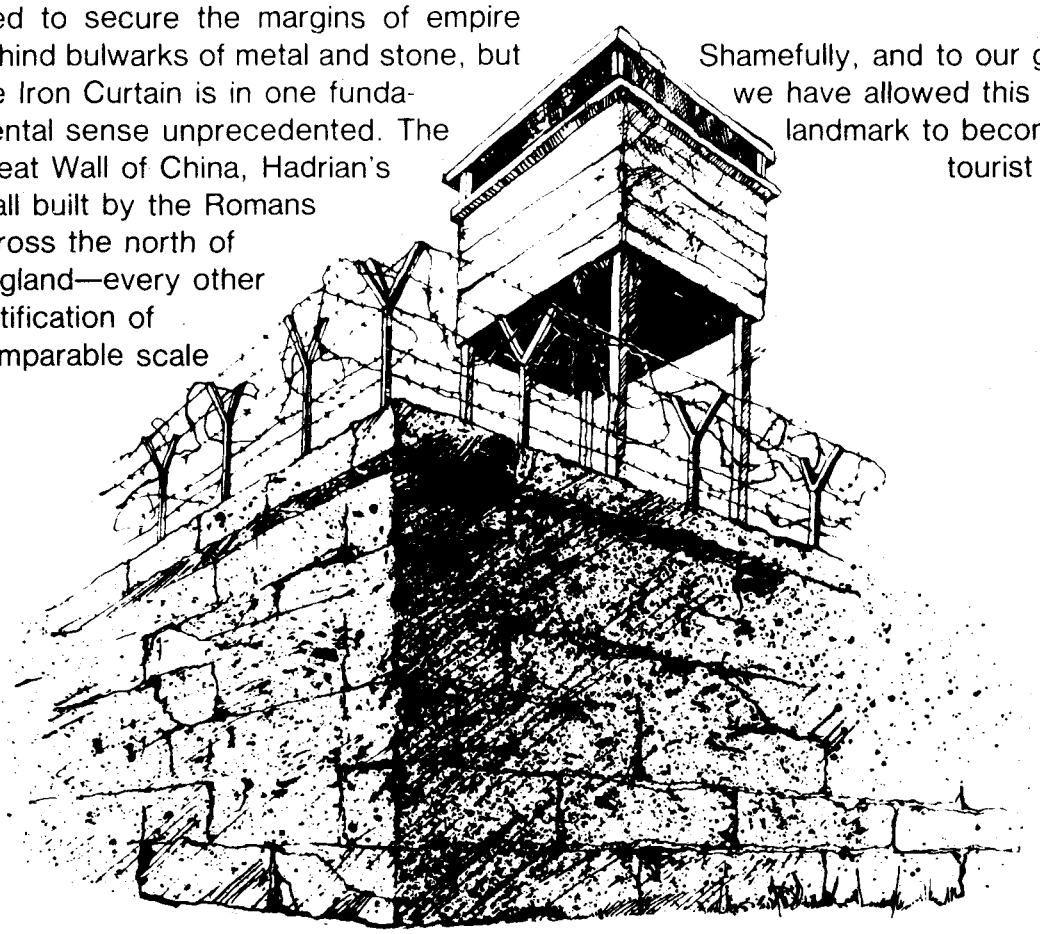
August, 1981 marked the twentieth anniversary of the construction of the Berlin Wall. The *significance of this event went largely* unreported by the American press with the notable exception of *Life* magazine.

Life published seventeen pages of color photos of the 4,500-mile border of the Soviet bloc. Everywhere, soldiers stand ready to shoot those who attempt to flee. The sobering implications of the Wall were not lost on the author of the article who wrote:

"It's not the first time a great power has tried to secure the margins of empire behind bulwarks of metal and stone, but the Iron Curtain is in one fundamental sense unprecedented. The Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall built by the Romans across the north of England—every other fortification of comparable scale has been a barricade thrown up against the threat of *invasion*. Unique in history, the Iron Curtain is predicated on the need to keep subject peoples penned in. After a few early modifications and continued remodeling over the years, it has become a remarkably effective prison."

In other words, the hundreds of millions of people within the Soviet bloc are, quite simply, slaves. Such is the grim reality of the socialist "dream." The image of the Wall, with its barbed-wire fences and machine-gun-toting guards, should be indelibly etched in the national consciousness.

Shamefully, and to our great peril, we have allowed this grotesque landmark to become a mere tourist attraction.



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action. The reason is that most quota programs are in a technical legal sense the result not of Title VII litigation, but of voluntary agreements entered into in order to avert Title VII discrimination charges. Signed, sealed, and delivered as consent decrees, affirmative action plans come under the equity jurisdiction of the federal courts. The broader question that now has to be answered is whether consent decrees aimed at fulfilling the policy goals of Title VII, and judicial authority to enforce the decrees, are subject to the requirements of Title VII.

Common sense says that voluntary agreements intended to carry out the purposes of a statute must conform to the requirements of the statute. If government officials under Title VII are prohibited from requiring quotas, it stands to reason that private parties seeking to fulfill the goals of antidiscrimination law are similarly restricted. This was the argument of the minority in *Weber,* but has become the argument of the majority in the Memphis case.

As seen in Justice Blackmun's dissent, however, defenders of quotas argue that consent decrees are private contracts that can contain whatever the negotiating parties want, and can be enforced without regard to the stated policy and requirements of Title VII. And in fact courts have generally acted as though they had inherent unlimited authority to impose quotas for racial balance and, as in the Memphis case, to modify consent decrees to maintain preferential treatment. The Supreme Court has now admonished them to the contrary. But it will be necessary to apply the principles announced in the Memphis case to a *Weber*-type situation.

Weber upheld the fiction that racial quotas acquiesced in under the threat of discrimination charges are private voluntary agreements that need not conform to the requirements of Title VII. William Bradford Reynolds has said his goal is to overturn this egregious decision, and now the Memphis decision provides a way of doing so. If the Supreme Court upholds the individual rights purpose of Title VII against the *Weber* doctrine of preferential treatment, it will have gone far toward restoring civil rights policy to the foundation intended by Congress in the historic statute of 1964. This will require time, but the decisive political and intellectual groundwork has been laid. Racial egalitarianism—defined as racial preference—can no longer be considered immune from responsible criticism. □

SPECTATOR'S JOURNAL

THE SIKHNESS OF INDIA

by Victor Anant

The pun is of course vulgar, but apt. For forty years the secular Republic of India has grappled with the task of trying to invent a nationality pervasive enough to claim the allegiance of its inhabitants, now around the 700 million mark. It has been a hopeless task in a brutally partitioned and hastily decolonized subcontinent which harbors every conceivable species of religious humbuggery, and caste, cult, clan, class, or culture. Phew!

Fortunately for Nehru, a self-proclaimed agnostic ruler of a massively Hindu Congress party, right from the start internal fissiparous tendencies could be contained by invoking Kashmir. Kashmir had a Hindu ruler with a Muslim majority population; it is a border state; a strategic area; Nehru's ancestral home; it justified a grotesquely imbalanced defense budget for a fledgling, "non-aligned," impoverished country; it could be "internationalized"; it was a tourist paradise. Alas, it became the touchstone of India's foreign policy, forever damning a vast and weighty nation with the vision of a Peeping Tom.

The Congress party, an opposition created by liberal Britons, should have been dismantled once its purpose was served, namely, to ensure some kind of orderly transition from Imperial rule to educated natives. Instead, it tried to be all things to all Indians. During much of his reign, 1947-64, the Punjab and Bengal, two volatile provinces clumsily cut up, allowed Nehru room for periodic bloodletting. His tough, down-to-earth home minister, Sardar Patel, chewed up the princely Native States with no more rhetoric than a spit and a cough, while Nehru had to send the Indian Army to take "police action" against the Nizam of Hyderabad and, later, Goa, "the Portuguese pimple on the face of India."

During the first two decades as Indians regrouped themselves into linguistic sub-nations, the Chinese came to Nehru's rescue with what is endearingly referred to as a border clash. Internationalism became the refuge of a Nehru who simply could not see what went on under his nose. His successor, the diminutive and shortlived Lal Bahadur Shastri, an orthodox Hindu in his habits, homespun, gave India's search for nationhood a fillip with two thunderingly bizarre wars against Pakistan. In 1965, after three days on the road with him in the northern Uttar Pradesh, I asked Shastri whether the Congress party had reconciled itself to the existence of Pakistan. He answered: "Partition? I wonder how many more partitions we have to see."

It is this escalating style of militancy which set the stage for Nehru's real successor, his daughter Indira Gandhi. She sent her troops into East Pakistan and turned it into Bangladesh. Today she is putting up a tortuously long barbed-wire fence along the border with the Bengali nation. And now she has muscled her way into the Sikh fortress of the Golden Temple, in Amritsar, to prevent the establishment of another breakaway nation, Khalistan.

There may be irreconcilable factions within the 15 million Sikhs of India but, dammit, there's not one Sikh who does not bear the name of Singh: fifteen million people with one surname. It is not the legality of Indira's decision to hack the Sikh community to size which will be questioned but the historical implications: Has she, unwittingly, created a Sikh nation?

Victor Anant has written for the London Spectator *and other publications.*

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The first guru of the Sikhs, Nanak, was born on the banks of one of the Indus tributaries, the Ravi. He was a corn merchant's son and a follower of a Muslim poet Kabir. Nanak died in 1583, preaching Hindu-Muslim unity and not, as is commonly understood, expounding a Hindu heresy. Some historians say it is even possible that Nanak performed the Muslim pilgrimage, the Haj. Certainly it is not until the time of the tenth (and last?) guru, Gobind Singh who was murdered in 1708, that Sikh leaders began to look upon their 6,000 mystical hymns as scriptures, proclaimed the baptism of the sword, and became like the Knights Templars of medieval Europe. Modern Sikhism got its Five Ks (the distinguishing marks of the clan, from long hair and comb to dagger), invited persecution, solidified into a distinctly visible and hardy community, and became so powerful as to sign a Treaty with the British, in 1809. The British thought it a good idea to have Sikhs in the Punjab as a buffer between themselves and Afghanistan in the event of a Russo-Afghan invasion.

When the Hindus in the British Army mutineed in 1857 (folklore has it that they revolted against having to use cow-fat for greasing their cartridges) the Sikhs helped to put down the rebels. They are, like most Punjabis, a hardy, enterprising, nomadic community. There are prosperous Sikh communities in Britain, Canada, and the U.S.—and, for a couple of decades now, they have notched up a remarkable rate of conversion in these countries. They have also had a fair share of heavy infighting within the diaspora.

Congress politics in the Punjab has always played the divide-and-rule game. Each Sikh leader who has taken on the central government has had to up the ante, demanding more. Indeed it has been Indira's interference in congregational matters of the Sikh community that transformed a rather more than boorish peasant's son into a holy apostle. Baptized with bullets in the Golden Temple, the 38-year-old hot gospeler, the *sant* Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, can now be counted among the martyrs who seem to fuel the new "fundamentalism." It is precisely what the elders of the Sikh community need to tighten their grip on the easygoing, freewheeling youngsters who, like other youngsters, are about as holy as the Hindu next door. The passions of the Sikhs have been pampered by India's central government in a country where disbelief—not faith—is the norm.

Pratap Singh Kairon, a former chief minister of the Punjab (who was murdered by his son, patricide being more than normally prevalent among them), told me in 1964 when I was chaperoning a group of Indian trainee journalists to the State capital, Le Corbusier's Chandigarh, "We Sikhs are really Hindus with more hair on us." Sikhs are monotheistic, unlike the Hindus who have a pantheon of gods and goddesses, but there is a deceptive virulence of a highly prosperous and visible minority hidden in that remark. Although it sounds purely semantic now, the Golden Temple in Amritsar has always displayed swords and muskets and other arms in its inner sanctums; the Sikhs in Britain made their own Indian passports; they have worldwide trading networks and currency transactions; and, most frightening for a secular country, India has always conceded Sikh regiments in the army. Although the Indian armed forces follow the British tradition it is certain that Mrs. Gandhi has permanently split the ranks.

The Indian authorities have gone to great extremes to destroy and discredit the Sikh extremists who made the Golden Temple their battle headquarters. For example, they have put it out that it is a carefully orchestrated "foreign plot" to destabilize India; they have found "Pakistani spies" among the Sikhs killed; they have also discovered sophisticated foreign arms and heroin smuggled in from Pakistan. On the face of it all these sound as plausible as they could be fabricated.

If Pakistanis could infiltrate the Sikh stronghold could the Indians have not done so in their own country? If it is a carefully planned foreign plot why was it allowed to run its course to such a gruesome end? What, in the name of all the Hindu gods of internal security, was the Indian counter-insurrection network doing? If the Golden Temple was a transit point in the heroin chain why didn't the Indian army go in to smash the mafia and not in the name of secularism?

What happens now depends very much on how the Sikhs react. Will there be an exodus—violating the penultimate clause of the Tashkent Treaty drawn up under Russian auspices after the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war in which both countries agreed not to create any situation which could lead to yet another refugee flight of panic? Will Pakistan recognize, and/or give shelter, to a government of Khalistan? What if the Sri Lanka government claims that the separatist Tamil Eelam Army (TEA) has been given hiding places in South Indian enclaves? It is impossible to escape the logic of history: that fundamentalism, which springs not from deep faith but disbelief in an age of disbelief, began in India a long age ago: The Buddha, a reform Hindu, was driven out and Buddhism, fleeing from its country of origin, footprinted itself across Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka to China and the Far East; the Islamic State of Pakistan was born out of distrust of the Congress; and, if you are any kind of a *yogi*, you head for California. □

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"Has the great art and mystery of politics no apparent utility?" he asked. "Does it appear to be unqualifiedly ratty, raffish, sordid, obscene and low down, and its salient virtuosi a gang of unmitigated scoundrels? Then let us not forget its high capacity to soothe and tickle the midriff, its incomparable services as a maker of entertainment."

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BOOK REVIEWS

PRINCES, PLAYBOYS, & HIGH-CLASS TARTS
Taki/Karz-Cohl/$14.95

Anthony Haden-Guest

It was 1978 when Taki Theodoracopulos moved to, or began to spend a substantial amount of time in, New York. He was forty-one, and already a columnist for the (British, and no relation) *Spectator*. He almost immediately began a column in *Esquire* at the behest of the then editor, Clay Felker, and it cannot be denied that he hit the American ground running.

One early column, for instance, described the interior of the newly fashionable restaurant, Mortimer's, as resembling "the inside of a fireplace" and related a spicy anecdote about the owner, Glenn Bernbaum, who "made his fortune selling polyester shirts." Another described the birthday party of Steve Rubell, the then owner of Studio 54, where the party was held, in the following terms: "A seven-foot cake in the shape of a Quaalude was wheeled in while thousands of streamers and confetti rained down. Fifteen hundred gay voices sang 'happy birthday to Steve' and then . . . pop went the giant cake-pill and out popped a half-naked Negro woman who, at closer inspection, turned out to be Bianca Jagger."

In 1981, Taki acquired a Manhattan town house on the Upper East Side. As a decorator he hired the well-regarded Mario Buatta whom, with an astonishing lapse into discretion, he does not name in print and describes the process thus: "Then I hired an Italian homosexual who reeked of garlic and spoke Brooklynese ('You wanta boid in da wall, I getcha a boid. I love yer pitchers, I tink dat's an El Greco') and he manages to do a house which is . . . cosy, warm, and in perfect taste."

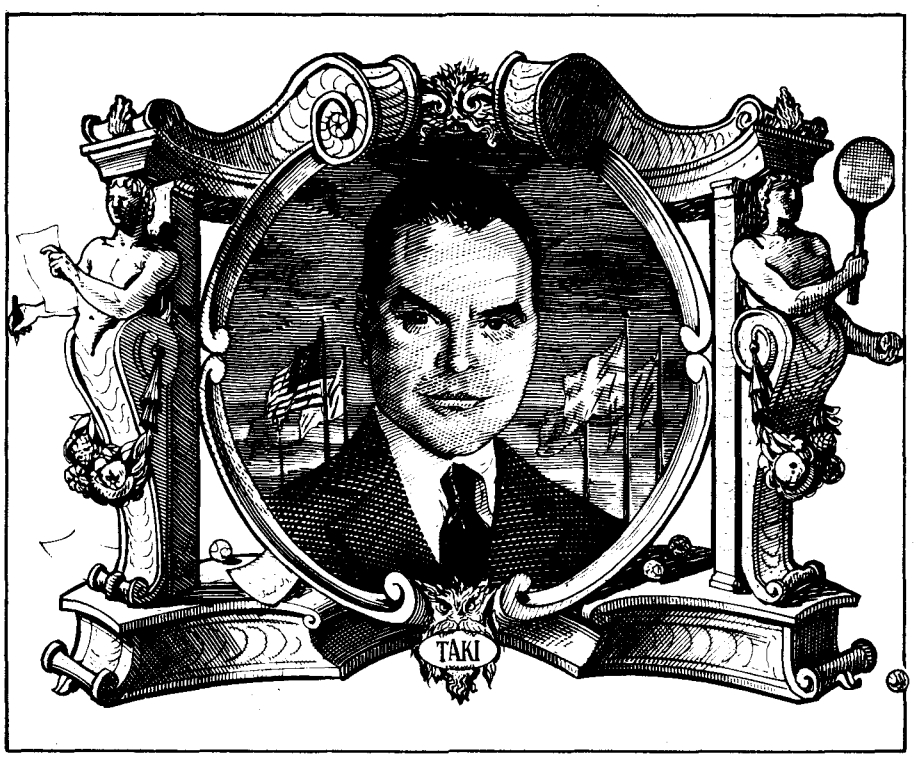
I have hacked these sentences from the hundred-and-two columns which have now been republished in hardcover under the title *Princes, Playboys, & High-Class Tarts*. At first, I was willing to believe that the principal emotion of Taki's targets at seeing these pieces like so many revenants, hurrying back into live print from those morgues where old magazines go to die, would have been a distinct *frisson* of angst. I was, of course, wrong.

A party was given for the book, for instance. It was held at Mortimer's. Bianca Jagger was there, as was Mario Buatta (who brought along a clove of garlic). Steve Rubell had meant to go, but couldn't make it. I saw no Kennedys, though George Plimpton made an acceptable substitute, nor did I notice Halston, Marisa Berenson, or the Aga Khan, but there was absolutely no shortage of such other *bêtes noirs* of the Taki columns as homosexuals, demimondaines, and Wets (this writer included), whose degree of undryness ranged from the merely moist to the wholly sopping.

Just why were they all there? This would have been a superfluous question at a run-of-the-mill book launch party—one of the most dangerous places in the world to stand is between a book person and a free drink—but a run-of-the-mill book party this wasn't. Literary folk were commendably thin on the ground. Most of the persons present undoubtedly had other troughs into which they could have dipped their glossy muzzles had they so chosen.

Nor, I think, can the presence of so many of Taki's past, present, and (unquestionably) future gun fodder at his table (actually, tables) simply be attributed to the deeply felt need of so many to keep in with the press. True, politicians, placemen, and social strivers of every stripe do tend to congregate when media folk entertain, but that's all to do with ambition, and this had nothing to do with ambition. What it had to do with, I think, was a certain sense of—well, not unpleasurable danger.

Taki speaks his mind, in print, and this is no mean thing. When Taki lashes out—at some respectable opinion or esteemed individual—he does so with a savage hilarity which is frightfully convincing. Tom Wolfe, who contributes a debonair foreword, compares Taki's slangy urgency to Céline, but goes on to point out that Céline labored endlessly to achieve the effect of spontaneity. Taki, on the other hand, writes the way that letter writers and diarists are supposed to write. Is he repeating himself? Does this anecdote have whiskers? Does this train of thought make 100 percent logical sense? No matter. He dashes on, hooting, frothing, and view-hallooing, and the reader, willy-nilly, dashes along after him.



That said, how do the pieces stand up? It would be disingenuous to pretend that this is an entirely objective book review (I know the man well, a fact which, as the reader of this collection will observe, gained me no immunity), but they have, for the most part, stood up very well indeed. Certainly better than most gossip columns or, come to that, most journalism. This is readily comprehensible. Taki's pieces can barely be considered "gossip columns" in any real sense of that insubstantial genre at all.

On this subject, Taki, for whom consistency has never been a watchword, shifts ground now and again. One of the weaker pieces in the book is entitled "In Defense of Gossip" and quotes the French novelist, Michel Déon ("Mitchel Déon," according to a rare typo in this excellently produced and designed volume) to the effect that "when one writes history or biography, one cannot build a character without gossip." Even Homer is dragged in as an ur-gossip. This is like observing that Michelangelo and Hugh Hefner share an interest in the nude figure. True enough, so far as it goes, which is rather less far than necessary.

In other moods, Taki feels differently. This came out very clearly in a discussion of "gossip" on "The David Susskind Show," which is a televison talk show originating in Manhattan. Those taking part were Susskind himself, Taki, and a trio of females, one of whom was New York's admirable Liz Smith.

The talk was unfocused. It reached its wooziest point when one of the female columnists—she hailed, I believe, from a mountain state—was describing the time a prince came to tea and she had to give him a tea bag. She described it as though it were at once the zenith and nadir of her career—I mean, gosh, it was a real prince, but, uhhhh, a *tea bag*—and Taki who grunted that the fellow in question was "a friend" was looking manifestly pent-up, ill at ease with the prattle.

A bit later, under pressure, he denied that he was a gossip columnist

Anthony Haden-Guest is a contributing editor of New York.

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at all, and led the brain trust into a heated, entirely irrelevant discussion of the situation in Lebanon, or was it Central America?

In truth, Taki's work really does differ from that of his co-guests, and not merely because he himself has always inhabited the world about which he chooses to write. It is true that most professional gossips only get cheek-by-jowl with their subjects by reason of their jobs, but there have always been certain exceptions to this rule of thumb (Cholly Knickerbocker and his successor, Suzy, namely Aileen Mehle, in the United States and a whole pack of scurrilous noblemen in Europe and the British Isles). It is not so much what Taki does that makes the difference. It is more the way that he does it. And this, of course, is inextricably bound up with the why.

Taki is the younger of two sons of John Theodoracopulos, a successful Greek shipowner. He was educated in the United States, and entered the world of amateur sports with zeal. He has skied and played tennis for Greece, still captains the Greek karate team, and reached a level of proficiency in boxing and polo (we will pass his backgammon and table tennis by in silence).

Taki did not start to write in a personal vein until his early middle age, and clearly this was not because he had become a Born-Again Artist, but because he was a-bubble with stuff to impart. The stuff was his own life. The foes, the (very few) idols. Moods, actions, opinions, relating to anything from the Fate of the West to much more important things like a favor done by Mr. Frank Costello and a pie-throwing in the Eagle Club, Gstaad.

Taki admires the British, but little resembles the writers on the London-based weeklies; his fortes not being the polished, ironic paragraph, the subtle barb, self-deprecatory humor, the dying fall. He is thinner-skinned, for one thing, and subject to flashes of wild prejudice of a sort uncommon in a country where antagonisms of race, creed, and color are subsumed in the universal absorption with class. Actually, he fits better than he imagines into America, a culture where the native voices include overstatement and aggressive humor. He is at his least interesting when he addresses a subject —usually, one imagines, at the suggestion of an editor—that doesn't get him lathered up. He is at his best, like Hunter Thompson, when his reporting is pervaded by a fictive sense (he never attended Steve Rubell's birthday, nor had he met Buatta, who happens to be a native of Staten Island). And he is at his very best when he mocks.

And what is it that he mocks? Targets include a bevy of individuals such as Karim Aga Khan, Roman Polanski, and just about any Kennedy. New Yorkers frequently find themselves excoriated as follows: "And then of course, in New York I seek to avoid the social-climbing *Interview* magazine and its prime mover, Bob Colacello (better known among us Francophiles as Bob Culacello). If, inadvertently, I happen to read *Interview,* I am forced to stay home for at least a fortnight, such is my disgust with Culacello's blatant brown-nosing of such archaic monuments of non-talent as Diane von Furstenberg, Ahmet Ertegun, and Jerry ('The Social Moth') Zipkin."

The thought-provoking thing here is not that Taki takes on such reasonably powerful targets. So, too, in other fields, do, say, such drama critics as John Simon, or the scribes of the *National Enquirer.* The point is that critics and tabloid writers take good care, by and large, not to consort overmuch with their prey (neglect of this rule of self-defense famously earned John Simon a dish of spaghetti atop his head in Elaine's) whereas the people about whom Taki writes are just the people whose paths he is most like-

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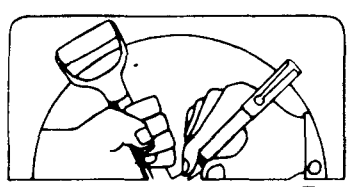

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ly to cross. Which is to say that reading him is rather like watching somebody paint himself into corner after corner, then scaling the wall with that one, proverbial bound.

But Taki has targets other than those he considers improperly celebrated, and these include a whole slew of beliefs that we Wets have been brought up to regard as entirely sacrosanct. In a lengthy, and, of course, deliberately provocative, interview with Bob Colacello in *Interview* magazine (yes, the same), he lambasts democracy as follows: "I think all men should have equal opportunity but that's where it stops. Just because all men are created equal does not mean some junkie down the street should have the same vote as a Harvard professor."

Later in the same tirade he manages at the same time to attempt a demystification of fascism as "an Italian economic system" and a disembowelling of New York clubland yahoos, observing "they won't even be shot—they'll die of alcoholism by the time they're thirty-five."

All of which is merely to reiterate that Taki is not necessarily consistent. He considers himself a conservative, but he is not a British conservative, not even, I think, in the Thatcherite mold. Is he an American conservative? Perhaps. Primarily, of course, he is Greek.

Greek history is both violent and vehement, as Taki makes plain in his first book, *The Greek Upheaval* (a title he chose after sensibly rejecting his first idea, *Chicken Colonels*). It is not dealt with here. "Poor Little Greek Boy," the longest section in the current *oeuvre,* is good-humored stuff. But Taki's Greekness should not be ignored. Peter Green, in reviewing Nicolas Gage's *Eleni* in the *Times Literary Supplement,* had this to say of the conservative Greek politician, Constantine Karamanlis:

> The oblivion (*lethe*) for which he called was never remotely in sight. Greeks, like Irishmen, have an exceptional talent for what they call *mnesikakia,* the remembrance of ancient wrongs, and always have had, as the *Oresteiea,* with its dreadful pursuing Furies, eloquently testifies. The Civil War of 1943-49 bred its own Furies, and furnished material in abundance that would rankle in countless hearts forever.

Taki is able to harness his energies in the service of social comedy, fortunately for us, or for those of us who do not attract his scrutiny. I, a close friend, though, in certain respects, miles apart, suggest that you part with your $14.95. This book is truly one of a kind.

One last cautionary note, though. The back cover of *Princes,* etc. is decorated with a photograph. It is by one Bruce Weber, better-known in the trade for his pictures of bronzed young males wearing Calvin Klein underwear. It purports to show the author, Taki Theodoracopulos. He looks pensive, almost somber. His mouth is closed.

This, clearly, is not the man we know.

Back to your camera, Weber. □

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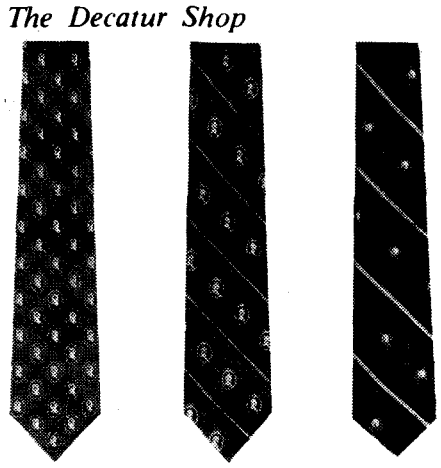

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Ivor Richard/Doubleday/$16.95

THE KINGDOM BY THE SEA:
A JOURNEY AROUND GREAT BRITAIN
Paul Theroux/Houghton Mifflin/$16.95

Mark Falcoff

Not long ago *Encounter* magazine ran some excerpts from the debates in the British House of Lords in the wake of U.S. landings in Grenada. While a few members bravely supported that action—notably Lord Thomas of Swynnerton and Lord Home of the Hirsel—most of the comments were of a type one would normally expect to hear in the parliament of a nation with whom we were at war, soon would be, or jolly well should be. Not merely the remarks themselves (which were bad enough) but their very tone and intensity provoked considerable surprise in the United States. This was especially the case along the Boston-Washington corridor, where Anglomania rages more fiercely than anywhere else on earth with the possible exception of Portugal or Chile. They raised the nagging question of how well we Americans really *know* Britain, as opposed to how deeply we feel about it. For as a matter of fact, our information about that country runs far behind our sentiment; the United Kingdom may be the only foreign nation Americans really like and trust, but this imposes no responsibility on the British to return the favor, and in fact many of them do not.

The central problem for Americans is that their view of Britain is largely fantastic or nostalgic, or a combination of the two. Well do I recall meeting my first Englishman at the age of 10 in 1951. He was an executive of the Cadbury Candy Company who had "come over," as the expression had it, to promote the sale of his products in the United States. A tall, florid gentleman, impeccably dressed and shod, he spoke in an accent which did not—to my acute disappointment—resemble the BBC. "I expect you think I talk oddly because I come from the other country," he volunteered. "Oh no sir," I gushed, "not at all. As a matter of fact, I rather *like* your accent."

Such the high noon of my passion. It subsequently cooled—and glacially so—before hard experience, which included expatriate academics, the *New Statesman,* Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens, and finally, the sheer horror of being an American visitor to British university communities, where I experienced the blunt edge of English rudeness, and some peculiarly subtle forms of social cruelty. Believe me, in this area the British have not lost their winning edge. For some time after that I refused to set foot in their country, and would pointedly snub British visitors to the United States. I even sympathized with Argentine aspirations to recover those islands which I, too, persisted in calling the Malvinas.

But I have finally decided, after much reflection and a second visit, that the fault was my own. What right, after all, did I have to assume that an entire civilization could be resumed in *Wuthering Heights,* Sherlock Holmes movies, and Agatha Christie? Britain is so much more than hedgerows and downs, tea and crumpets, harrumphing lords and tiara'ed ladies, and if I hadn't taken the trouble to find out as much, then I could expect whatever curved balls came my way. Many of my fellow citizens, it would appear, are in need of similar instruction.

How well do these two new books provide it? The first is by Ivor Richard, the former British ambassador at the United Nations, now an official of the European Community in Brussels. In spite of its small size, it manages to convey an astonishing range of information about British society—not merely things we should know but things we thought we knew and things we didn't even know we needed to know—along with a full discussion of the more arcane aspects of the honors system, the aristocracy, life in the House of Commons, elections, the civil service, and the monarchy. It also manfully attempts to explain the pervasive contradictions of British life—class consciousness together with increasing opportunities for "new men"; the cult of privacy and the urge toward

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collectivism; the pressures to conform together with tolerance for individual eccentricity. A former Labour member of Parliament, Richard is self-evidently a man of culture, good humor, and considerable moderation. He makes his country sound like himself.

It is also self-evident that *We, the British* was written for an American publisher and destined for American readers, since it repeatedly anticipates the kind of questions and objections which the author imagines Americans would raise—and perhaps often do raise—about his subject. At times it reads as if portions were originally delivered as lectures before civic groups in the most unsophisticated quarters of the American South and West. Whether such encounters ever took place is quite beside the point. Richard has his Ur-American clearly fixed in mind: an unreconstructed Reaganite, a sort of primitive, right-wing troglodyte, a well-meaning sort, really, whose mind is clouded with all sorts of silly populist notions about Britain, and particularly about British socialism. The chap needs to be set right. But since we are, after all, an urbane British diplomat, the thing must be done deftly, and without giving undue offense. In this Richard largely succeeds. But comfortable as we are in this warm bath of condescension, some of us cannot help but wonder what the author sounds like when safely out of diplomatic earshot.

Some of what Richard tells us—particularly about the Ulster question—is sensible and well-founded, and needs to be taken seriously by American readers, particularly those of Irish origin. But his discussion of nationalized industries, the public health service, and the disincentives of the British tax system is rather more open to question. Clearly, Richard *likes* these things, which means that sometimes he insists that they work, at other times that no one really knows whether they work or not, still others that even if they don't work, and even if they exact a larger social price than they should, still and all they serve other goals which he prefers. This is resumed in the statement, "By most standards other than those of crude commercialism, I am content that my country should be judged." One can hear the teacups rattling at the Bennington (Vt.) or Princeton (N.J.) chapters of the English-Speaking Union.

The problem, however, is not that England is not like the United States (e.g., "crude commercialism"), but rather, that it isn't more like West Germany, France, Belgium, even Italy, all of whom over the past generation have overtaken it in industrial growth, product innovation, and general welfare. What finally appeals to Richard about his country is precisely what attracts certain kinds of Eastern seaboard Americans—the exquisite combination of aristocracy and socialism, which keeps at bay (or rather, attempts to) the unwashed entrepreneur and self-made man. Fortunately, these efforts have not been entirely successful, which explains much of what economic progress Britain has made since World War II. And the political triumph of Margaret Thatcher, dealt with only in passing in the pages of this book, raises further questions which its author and presumably some of his American readers would prefer not to face.

If Richard's book seems a bit less critical of its subject than it should, Paul Theroux's travelogue more than makes up for it. The format is somewhat similar to his other travel books, *The Great Railway Bazaar* and *The Old Patagonian Express,* in which the author moves virtually Last Class through an ambitious and highly improbable itinerary; in this case it is Britain by skirting its coastal margins. To such projects he brings a remarkable literary ability to evoke unfamiliar places and people, together with a real hatred of travel itself. This is quite a combination, and it shows: Theroux's accounts of far-off places make you glad you stayed at home.

In the case of Britain, however, there are some additional wrinkles. For the last dozen or so years Theroux has lived in London, so Britain is not precisely an exotic place for him. Moreover, as an American resident he has doubtless endured some pretty merciless comments from his neighbors; *The Kingdom by the Sea* is apparently his way of returning the compliment. In some ways it is our long overdue revenge for Charles Dickens's *American Notes* (1842); in fact, in a facetious paraphrase of that work, he even dedicates his book to those English friends "who, loving their country, can bear the truth when it is told good humoredly and in a kind spirit." Actually, the book contains only slightly more good humor and kindness of spirit than Dickens's vicious original.

Apart from the fact that it is exceptionally well written, and at times quite entertaining, *The Kingdom by the Sea* performs one greatly needed service for American readers—it disassembles Britain into its constituent ethnic parts—England, Wales, Scotland, and Ulster. (Richard does the same, with an additional and very helpful chapter on "The Newcomers"—the East Indians, Hong Kong Chinese, Africans, Pakistanis, and others, without whom any portrait of present-day Britain would be incomplete.) This is particularly helpful because although we Americans tend to confuse "England" with "Britain," the former is only one of several nations which make up the United Kingdom, and in fact is much the least attractive. Indeed, what some of us have taken to be the snobbery, deceit, hypocrisy, above all the sheer unkindliness of the British is actually the family vice of only one branch of the clan. Even so, one cannot help wondering whether Theroux is playing quite fair by giving us our largest slice of England on the South Coast, where rickety Tories go to die.

His descriptions of Scotland and Wales are far more finely nuanced, partly, I think, because these are people of greater warmth and openness to outsiders. He is at his very best in Northern Ireland, where he manages to wend his way between the two contending parties with grace and sympathy, much as he did in Panama in *The Old Patagonian Express.* He deplores the ridiculous nature of Ulster's religious wars, yet still understands their peculiar, twisted logic. And, as he says, nowhere else were people so inclined to burst out, "Come home for lunch!" A traveler will have his own criteria for evaluating places.

Three themes dominate and unify this long and sometimes disjointed book, and they go a long way toward explaining today's Britain to Americans. The first is decline—not merely in economic or military might, but also in equipoise and national self-esteem. A nation, after all, cannot experience the kind of sharp reduction in international status such as Britain has undergone since 1939 without it registering in the lives of ordinary people. Theroux's dreary tableau—abandoned factory towns, unemployment, bored and listless young people, the demoralization of survivors of Dunkirk and El Alemein, above all, the sheer fear of the future—is frankly heartbreaking. Here, after all is said and done, is a proud and ancient people who have given much to the world (and indeed to our own country) forced to retire, as it were, on a pittance of their former income. One wonders whether we could do it so gently and so well, and one asks, too, whether our own persistent sniping at the Empire during and after World War II served the interests of any of the parties involved, not to mention our own.

The second, very much related to the first, is the continuing impact of the Second World War. It so happens that Theroux's journey took place at the very same time as the British were at war with the Argentines in the South Atlantic. But apart from some jingoistic newspaper headlines, he found the British "in private, ashamed and confused" about that conflict. Conversations about the Falklands tended quickly to slide back in time, to nostalgic comment about rationing and the blitz. This points to an essential difference in our national ex-

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periences: For the English, World War II was endured on their own territory—midnight bomb attacks, the destruction of historic cities, the expectation at one point of a German invasion at any time. One elderly resident of Canterbury once recalled for me helping to gather up directional signs on the Dover road in the summer of 1940, to make life difficult for Hitler's legions once they had landed. "As we bloody well assumed they would. An experience like that," he added, "puts its mark on you for the rest of your life." That was in *1968*. Further, while the postwar period for the United States began with unconditional surrender and continued with the baby boom, the rush to the suburbs, and a meteoric rise in living standards, for the British it commenced with national bankruptcy and went on to rationing, international retreat, and finally, when a measure of recovery was finally achieved, to a pale and inadequate copy of our own consumer revolution. Small wonder we see the world so differently.

But the third point, and perhaps the most important, is that the English do not treat foreigners much differently from how they treat each other. They are suspicious of all strangers and prefer not to deal with them altogether. This is part of what George Orwell once called the ferocious privateness of their lives, and Theroux rediscovered it on his jaunts. Some of it is probably due to the weather, which forces them to spend much of their time indoors. Hence their love, as he writes, of "squashy sofas and warm rooms and the prospect of tea." But demography plays a role as well. As Ivor Richard points out, the population density of the British Isles is 228 persons per square kilometer, compared to 98 for France and 24 for the United States. But for England alone, it is 356 per square kilometer, and for Southeast England, where fully a third of the population lives, it is 619. Such density, needless to say, does not conduce to random chumminess; indeed, if under such circumstances the English tried to act like Americans, they would drive each other mad. So what constitutes a sometimes acute social irritation for the tourist or occasional visitor is in fact a virtual national necessity.

Paradoxically, each of these books tends to defeat its apparent purpose before the American reader. Richard sets out to justify his country, to explain its quirks and gloss easily over its faults, to make us feel a bit sorry, as it were, that we too cannot be British. In this he does not succeed, because if there are many things about his country we do not know, the things that we do are widely and informatively reported in this country, and they are not particularly flattering. But if Theroux's account is supposed to make us dislike these people, he too fails. His characters are not, after all, Oxbridge academics or guttersnipe journalists, but ordinary folk who are not out to impress anyone or to put everyone down, simply decent if not very glamorous people. They are not, however, for the most part what we see of Britain abroad, or even on the islands themselves when we happen to visit. Obsessed as we Americans seem to be with the pomp and paraphernalia of monarchy or the slightly ratty elegance of Britain's ancient university foundations, we miss much of the point about this country—difficult, enigmatic, maddeningly close and yet impossibly far away. □

PARIS
John Russell/Harry N. Abrams/$50.00

Franz M. Oppenheimer

"Car la Seine est une amante, et Paris est dans son lit." —La Seine

John Russell, the art critic of the *New York Times,* has written a love letter to Paris, a love letter that has a life-long lover's knowledge of the heart and an awe-inspiring scholar's erudition. This is no coffee-table book designed to be given away and not read, although the illustrations alone would make *Paris* worth treasuring. Above all, there is the text, which defies summary and description, for how does one compress a universe?

In a short romantic passage at the beginning of the book, Russell reveals the passion behind the erudition: "You can live half your life in Paris; you can love Paris, marry a Parisian, raise Parisian children. But none of that will make you a Parisian. This is irksome, if you are by nature a joiner rather than a looker-on, but it gives Parisian life a tautness, an inner coherence, and a ferocious continuity. Paris in this sense is a secret society." This is the emotion of Yeats about Maud Gonne, not that of Major MacBride about his wife.

Many other men have loved Paris like a woman even though, unlike Russell, they did not see themselves as outsiders. French writers in particular have shared Russell's fascination with every physical aspect of Paris. In *Remembrance of Things Past* Proust refers to 68 Parisian streets by name. The Proustian knows not only in what street Swann, the Guermantes, the Verdurins, and Odette lived, he also knows through what street Swann went to his dentist: the Rue Duphot.

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In *Sentimental Education* Flaubert seems to have positive sentiments for none of his characters but only for Paris. The few agreeable passages of that book read like passages of Russell's. Let me quote just one from *Sentimental Education*: "His eyes, leaving the stone Pont de Notre-Dame and the three suspension bridges, invariably strayed in the direction of the Quai aux Ormes [now the Quai de l'Hôtel-de-Ville], towards a clump of old trees which looked like the lime-trees in the port of Montereau. Facing him, the Tour Saint-Jacques, the Hôtel-de-Ville, Saint-Gervais, Saint-Louis, and Saint-Paul rose among a maze of roofs, and the genie on the July Column shone in the east like a great golden star, while in the other direction the dome of the Tuileries stood out against the sky in a solid blue mass." Writing about the Seine, Russell echoes Flaubert's feelings when looking across, up, and down the river from the Ile de la Cité: "Between the Pont d'Austerlitz in the east and the Pont d'Iéna in the west it was difficult until quite lately to stand on either bank and point to anything ignoble."

There are innumerable similar passages in French novels, perhaps none more explicit than Michel Déon's in *Les gens de la nuit*:

> At daybreak . . . I opened a window and found myself in an unknown land: the boulevard Saint-Germain lined with trash cans, plane trees with diffident leaves, chairs piled upon one another in front of the cafes, the deserted street. Was this my city, this trembling scene with its furtive shadows? Did I have the right to look at a woman who is waking up at that uncertain hour? Anyone of sensibility must feel shy at the moment he discovers such a well-hidden secret. At daybreak there is in Paris such an uncertainty between the sordid and the glorious that one had to have been her lover for a long time not to be disappointed. I decided to become her lover.

Anyone other than an erudite lover of Paris will find it difficult to follow reference upon reference to names that may not trigger pictures out of his memory at once. This difficulty makes *Paris* a book that demands effort and discipline from its readers. Indeed, having believed that I knew Paris well, I began to feel ignorant almost to the point of illiteracy when I reached its first descriptive and historical chapter, "The Louvre." The first sentence reads: "The Louvre is the largest of Parisian monuments, and the most inscrutable." We are then plunged into the equivalent of a college course on the history of the Louvre, its surroundings, its architecture, and the monarchs, architects, artists, and politicians who made that history. To anyone less learned than John Russell I recommend he read that chapter, as well as most others, with the green *Michelin Tourist Guide of Paris* at hand. Only by referring to maps of Paris, and drawings in that *Guide*, could I follow sentences like "The part built under Napoleon extends from the Pavillon de Marsan to the Pavillon de Rohan." The Michelin shows additions made by Napoleon I, as well as those made by Catherine de Medici, Henry IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV, and Napoleon III, by different colors in a diagrammatic perspective drawing of the Louvre. But even in the Michelin I failed to locate the Pavillon de Rohan.

Perhaps other teaching aids and reference works are needed. Even among the educated, few will know the architects Sebastiano Serlio, the brothers Le Breton, and Pierre Lescot, who are mentioned as having been or not having been employed by François I.

The chapters on the different neighborhoods, the Grands Boulevards, Haussmann, the Paris of the First Empire, the Palais Royal, and the Comédie-Française present the same difficulties. Note that the chapters do not correspond to any symmetrical scheme of organization. Some deal with an *arrondissement,* some with a building, some with a historical period, and one with the impact of a city planner, Haussmann. Here again we see the spirit of the heart and not that of geometry at work.

These difficulties should discourage nobody from reading the book. No guide could be a substitute. Even when we miss the significance of a name, person, building, historical event, painting, composition, novel, or play, we are left amused, enriched, and

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creatively bewildered by every page. For instance, Russell writes about "The Marais":

> It was in the Marais that the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day was organized, that Louis XVI and his family were imprisoned, and that Madame de Sévigné went regularly to listen to Bourdaloue, the finest preacher of his day. It was there that the child Mozart played, that François Couperin and his sons lived and worked, and that Marc-Antoine Charpentier was *maître de chapelle* at the Eglise Saint-Paul-Saint-Louis. Nowhere is the great classical age of French music more vividly present to us.

As to life in the Marais of just yesterday, now "in full ebullition," and of "the kind of complexity that cannot be described, let alone disentangled, in a page or two," another passage must serve for many:

> In these small and overpopulated enclaves we saw the last of the truly cosmopolitan Paris—not the cosmopolis of the rich, but the older and more authentic society in which respect for the habits and personality of others was absolute. Those who have kept clear of poverty often believe it to be a great leveler, but you were more likely to find a standardized human being in the Hotel Plaza Athenée than in the Gorkyesque bistros of the Marais. Within it were concentrated elements from the life of the Baltic states, Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean seaboard of Africa, the Sahara, Turkey, Lebanon. . . . This was, in fact, the true Musée de l'Homme . . ."

The chapter on the Marais comprises 24 pages. It contains descriptions of museums, detailed discussion of the history, architecture, and contents of great houses, and even a sympathetic appraisal of the Centre Pompidou.

Russell shows his critic's nature not only when taking on controversial matters like the Centre Pompidou. Every quarter and many streets are given marks, and among the many qualities of *Paris* is that of raising questions. Why, for instance, does Russell believe that the whole Ile de la Cité "is now *triste* beyond redemption"? I know no place on the globe that lifts my spirit higher. There is the glory of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, with which, however, Russell has his problems. "The view from the west door [across La Place du Parvis Notre-Dame] is one of the ugliest in Paris," he says, and having traced the pillages, losses of treasures, and changes the Cathedral has undergone during the last eight hundred years, he "can sympathize with the medievalists who feel little but dejection as they prowl from one restoration to the next." Still, he must confess that none of these misfortunes touches the essence: that "one cannot but feel that the Parvis de Notre-Dame is still, in some real sense, the center of France" and that "Notre-Dame remains tremendously moving. Nothing can take away the fact that it is essentially a family church, with all France for its family . . . the bourdon [bell] of Notre-Dame is *the* voice of France."

Here I have more sympathy with Russell's feelings than with his scholarly views about the ravages of change. I cannot help being convinced that lighting a candle in Notre-Dame is more pleasing to the Lord than doing so anywhere else.

On a more earthly level, what could be less *triste* than the flower stalls and garden shops on the Place Louis-Lépine and the Quai de la Corse, just off the Parvis de Notre-Dame? And where on earth can one see dusk fall more poetically than from the second-floor corner table of the Auberge du Vert Gallant overlooking a corner of the Palais de Justice, the Seine, and the trees and houses on its left bank? All this on the Ile de la Cité.

Similarly, why should the Rue Saint-Jacques, which runs from the Seine past the Panthéon, the Sorbonne, the Luxembourg Gardens to the Val-de-Grace, be called a "forbidding street"? True, we learn from Russell that much that was noble has been torn down, but also that there are still jewels to be looked for. Indeed, I have decided to carry some xeroxed pages from *Paris* in my pocket the next time I walk up the Rue Saint-Jacques in order to find the seventeenth-century farmhouse at No. 262, and other places I knew nothing about.

I recommend to all who plan to visit Paris and to explore some specific part of it to do likewise: to xerox a page here and a few more pages there and to carry them along. The entire tome is too large and heavy to fit easily into transatlantic luggage, to say nothing of carrying it on long walks. Yet only with the right pages from Russell will we be able to unlock the many doors to which he has given us the keys.

The book's general lessons, however, are best learned in advance by reading the entire book: Thus it is useful for the visitor to be warned in advance that the distances along the Seine are greater than they seem; that in the 5th *arrondissement* "there are cafés in which you can sit all day over the philosophy of Malebranche, and cafés in which you would be unwise to sit at all," that "the choice of an hotel is as private a matter as the choice of a wife," and that the Francophile's article of faith about every Parisian restaurant being a good one is an illusion.

As we have seen, Russell can give bad marks, and marks with which one can quarrel, but when it comes to the grisly history of Paris, he limits himself almost entirely to euphemistic brush strokes. He defends himself in advance by stressing that his book "is not a political history" and that he does "not propose to take the reader day by day through all the tumultuous commotions that Paris has undergone." True, such a "day by day" account would be a different book, but even in the book we have, should one not ask whether this grisly side is mentioned adequately, when we are merely told in the context of "the long-running civil war between Parisian and Parisian" that "the first and most evident characteristic of the Parisian commotion is its vivacity," and that in 1830 the students of the Ecole Polytechnique, in standing up to the Garde Royale, "fulfilled the immemorial role of young people in Paris, which is to get themselves beaten up or killed for an idea"? Yeats had harsher words for Maud Gonne.

It is puzzling that one so aware of the impact of the past on the present as John Russell pays so relatively little attention to the horrors of the past: the gore and terror of the revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848 and of the Commune, the role of Parisian politicians, clergy, and writers in the origins of virulent racial and political anti-Semitism during the Dreyfus case and the Occupation (he does mention in passing the herding of Jews into the Vélodrome d'Hiver before their deportation in 1942), and the lynching trials of alleged collaborators after World War II.

Non-political horrors, however, are not brushed aside. Before the middle of the nineteenth century "the houses in which most people lived were dirty, damp, dark, and smelled bad. . . . Paris in the nineteenth century was primarily a city in which more than half of the inhabitants lived very badly." One might add that even in this century, indeed, until the miraculous thirty years from 1950 to 1980, a sen-

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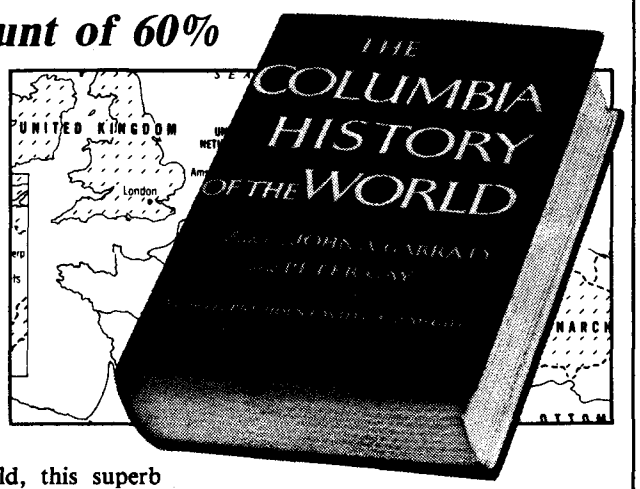

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sitive soul, like Rilke's *Malte Laurids Brigge,* could be so overwhelmed by the suffering of the poor and sick that the splendors of Paris almost passed him by. Still the same was true of most capitals, except that France with its century of bloody revolutions managed to pass basic social legislation only some sixty years after Disraeli and Bismarck had done so without revolutions.

Perhaps this past lends some credence to the conventional slander, spread not only by foreigners but by Parisians themselves, that Parisians are more rude, selfish and inhospitable than other mortals—"abrupt, edgy, rapacious, egoistic, and smug." Russell has some trouble dealing with this nonsense; it "is both true and not true," he informs us. But eventually he comes out on the right side: "Nowhere is friendship more enduring, or hospitality more subtly resourceful, than in Paris." For more than forty years I have had the greatest difficulty in understanding malevolent generalizations about Parisians to which even Russell almost seems to have succumbed. Again and again I have experienced just the opposite, as for instance, when at the rush hour during a subway strike, and when no taxis could be found, a bell boy at a restaurant drove me in his own car some twenty-five minutes to the suburb of Neuilly and refused payment with the explanation that he was not a taxi driver, or when a complete stranger whom I asked for directions to a restaurant insisted on walking me there four blocks in pouring rain.

Nor is it true, as Russell does maintain, that the private world of Parisians is impenetrable, that, as he says at the outset, "Paris . . . is a secret society." He concedes that "Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were made welcome," but seems to find it more significant that Ernest Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald probably never got to be at home "in a Parisian house of any distinction." If true, it is likely that Hemingway and Fitzgerald never made an effort. Speaking English and hanging out with other expatriates was easier.

Russell surely has made the effort, and I would be more than astonished if I were to learn that he was not at home in many a Parisian house of distinction. Rather Russell *wants* to see Parisians in the romantic glow of mystery. How else could he write about the Parisian woman: "She is not open to the foreign visitor. It is difficult for us even to look at her, as we can look at the women of Rome or Milan."

Let us be thankful for his romanticism. Hemingway called Paris a moveable feast. John Russell's book about it is a feast of civilization. □

THE SUPPLY-SIDE REVOLUTION: AN INSIDER'S ACCOUNT OF POLICYMAKING IN WASHINGTON

Paul Craig Roberts/Harvard University Press/$18.50

Thomas Hazlett

Ronald Reagan rode to Washington on a mandate, and with a mission, but soon fell victim to a quiet mutiny (so quiet, in fact, that the commander never knew he had walked the plank). Reagan's mandate was his bruising KO over bantamweight Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential prize fight; his mission was to cut federal spending, slash taxes, and level overzealous regulatory bureaucrats. Reagan had his program in place, and his congressional votes in line. But—just at the moment of triumph—he was betrayed by a cabal of his closest allies. Jim Baker and the Senate Republicans undermined the President with ruthless pressure and sneaky press leaks, endorsing higher taxes in response to powerhungry David Stockman's constant wailing about the deficit, which in turn was a factor only because of flub-ups at the Fed by Paul Volcker. The "supply-side revolution" was vanquished, and the dastardly deed was definitely an inside job.

Buy it?

If you do, you'll be pleased to find that this is just what Paul Craig Roberts, President Reagan's once and never-again assistant treasury secretary for economic policy, has to sell. In his *Supply-Side Revolution,* Roberts assiduously documents the book's subclaim: "An Insider's Account of Policymaking in Washington." Roberts, I suspect, is a relatively reliable source for a supply-side yarn; he appears to be about the only old-time supply-sider still with us who hasn't become wealthy or famous (or President) from peddling the stuff. Instead, Roberts has been toiling to make the rest of us wealthy—or so he believes. But let us not overstate the virtues of altruism.

To his credit, Roberts does a skillful job outlining the momentum that existed in Congress for tax cuts . . . under *Carter.* By June 1977 Senate Finance Committee Chairman Russell Long, says Roberts, "did not think it had cost the government any money when the top bracket was cut from 90 percent to 70 percent in the 1960s. Nor was the 70 percent rate a revenue raiser. 'It would be my guess if you would reduce your top rate to 50 percent, you actually would make money.'" Soon, both Democratic-controlled houses, frightened over the stagflation mess and angling for a way to cut in front of a growing tax-revolt movement, were voting to cut capital gains taxes and personal income taxes as well. In October 1978, the House and Senate voted by wide margins (268-135 and 65-20) for the Nunn Amendment ("son of Kemp-Roth"), a plan to cut taxes and limit federal spending. (It would, said Senator Muskie, "tie the hands of future Congresses"—which, oddly, was Muskie's argument *against* the measure.) Although the Carter Administration succeeded in gutting the Nunn Amendment on a conference committee butcher block, tax cuts were blowing in the wind. The Democratic leadership rallied desperately to hold off the persistent Marjorie Holt, whose bill to combine Kemp-Roth tax cuts with commensurate spending reductions had been beaten back in the summer of 1978 by a shaky 206-201 margin. And then came the stunning 1979 report from the Joint Economic Committee of Congress. Roberts describes it:

> Led by Senator Bentsen, the new chairman, and Representative Clarence Brown, JEC produced its first unanimous report in twenty years. It was a breath of fresh air. Stagflation, said the report, is the result of policies that have stimulated demand while retarding supply. The Democratic majority, including such liberals as Kennedy and McGovern, signed the report, thereby endorsing the supply-side approach that the Republican minority had been working toward for two years.

Unfortunately, Roberts's account of Reaganomics under Reagan is less compelling. What with the tax cut fever pushing Nunn, Long, and even the JEC on to new heights (and cuts), according to Roberts, Reagan's supply-side agenda would have flown if not for "the struggle between President Reagan and his aides." Although the 3-year, 25 percent across-the-board personal income tax reductions did make it into law, the cuts were delayed, the policy was never adequately explained, and the Fed botched the recovery. "During 1981-82 the supply-side approach to economic policy fell victim in part to the failure of monetary policy, in part to the ego struggle that senior aides carried on against the President and in part to a campaign conducted against supply-side economics by elements of the media," claims Roberts.

Specifically, in the dark, recessionary days that followed Reagan's 1981 tax cut victory we were hit by "Volcker's regime of six months of zero money growth—a policy far below Federal Reserve targets and one unexpected by the Administration." As the Fed created recession, Stockman conspired with White House insiders to "make himself economic policy czar," and to focus national attention on the deficit, which, he alleged, would stymie recovery if unchecked. Thus "the Reagan strategy of balancing the budget through economic growth was being replaced with the Stockman strategy of balancing the budget with higher taxes." David Stockman's motive? "Watching Stockman push so hard for tax increases created the impression that Stockman wanted supply-side economics to be perceived as having failed."

C'mon.

While Roberts has done serious supply-siders a favor in breaking ranks with Jude Wanniski ("Wanniski . . . sensationalized" supply-side economics) and Arthur Laffer ("none of the supply-siders within the Administration were Lafferites promising that the tax-rate reductions would pay for themselves in higher revenues"), he fails to deal with the global economic issues surrounding tax rate reductions. Nothing could be easier than to play armchair Fed chairman; if economists know anything about macroeconomics it is that reining in a 13.3 percent inflation rate in two years will be neither perfect nor painless. Zero money growth for six months may have been an overreaction—but that is the proper side on which to err for credibility when the world (i.e., Wall Street) suspects another underreaction. Roberts could be a bit more understanding of the man who, at a minimum, has given Roberts's former employer his one decisive policy victory: the gagging of inflation.

It must frustrate Roberts terribly to have a zero-cost solution to high taxes,

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rampaging inflation, and economic stagnation, only to see the President's inner circle uninterested in his plan. But why would David Stockman, who drank from the very same cooler as Roberts, be such a hard sell? Because, in fact, *spending* matters. Certain supply-siders simply deny this outright: Wanniski and Laffer, Roberts notes, were in fact pushing for *higher* federal spending (cut marginal tax rates and let the good times roll). Roberts has a more plausible rationale for ignoring spending and, hence, deficits. He admits that tax cuts will prompt deficits, at least temporarily, but will mitigate this problem by encouraging savings. Let's suppose, says Roberts, that if one dollar of tax reduction is granted, it will result in forty cents additional tax payments (the work incentive effect) and forty cents more savings, thus leaving just twenty cents of that dollar tax cut to enlarge the deficit. This is plain wrong. Inasmuch as deficits are a promise of future taxes, any positive incentive effects deriving from lower current tax rates will simply be cancelled by the expectation of higher future tax rates—when today's investments pay off. Indeed, the classical economic argument for increased private saving is that consumers rationally predict higher future tax payments, and put aside for them. They save for (future) taxes. But this simply turns savings into a burden that discourages work effort just as certainly as taxes on marginal income. In fact the only "incentive kick" from tax cuts without commensurate spending cuts is had by financing today's programs on the backs of *future* taxpayers—hardly a moral or democratic argument for tax "cuts." Twist as supply-siders might, every dollar spent by government will be expropriated from a taxpayer somewhere, sometime—with interest.

If government deficits bore no cost, it would be foolish for the feds to tax us a red cent: simply borrow the entire federal budget. Yet, no one really takes the supply-siders' claim of a no-cost deficit seriously; deficits *do* promote inflation fears, they *do* crowd out the private sector. Rather than pressuring Volcker for a little quick inflation fix, we would be better served by some Reaganesque fiscal restraint. As Michael Evans recalls, in his most convincing *The Truth About Supply-Side Economics*[1]:

> With no major spending cuts in sight, the entire hope of the Reagan administration for a balanced budget with higher defense spending then hinged on some miracle that tax receipts would somehow bridge the gap. Some of the true believers still held tight. Ignoring the fact that the budget had returned to balance the year after the Kennedy-Johnson tax cut precisely because government spending did not increase, they clung to the scant hope of the Immaculate Reflows.

The supply-side theory is a bright and beautiful lady who needs persistent reminders not to behave like a harlot. With so much to offer with integrity, why should she cheapen herself? Denouncing those who point to the cost of federal spending programs, which under Reagan have bulged from 23.3 percent of GNP to 25.7 percent, is a task better suited to old-fashioned Keynesians. Tax reduction, of marginal *and* average rates, should form part of a serious economic reform package encompassing significant spending cuts and extensive deregulation. But not only has the conservatives' fiscal agenda proved as extravagant as the liberals' (as George Will has gleefully pointed out), but the limit of Mr. Reagan's deregulatory efforts has been to exile Rita Lavelle to federal housing, and James Watt to Siberia. Roberts, in a telling omission, says not a word of Reagan's embarrassing failure to liquidate the departments of energy and education or of the scandalous boosters to agricultural subsidies (now at $60 billion annually, according to the *Economist* —$30,000 per farm family).

At its core, supply-side is a graph masquerading as a crusade. Its useful contribution was to push economists and policy-makers into re-emphasizing the financial incentive effects of the tax code. The simple notion that higher marginal tax rates create "substitution effects" tending to take people out of work and investment and into leisure and tax dodges is universally acknowledged by all educated analysts. But the idea that needed pushing was this substitution effect's prime import, relative to other factors, in explaining economic activity. This the supply-siders have done with great vigor, and reasonable success.

Still, the revolt against fat government needs more, and has more. Indeed, the tax cut ball was sent rolling by California's Proposition 13, the tax cut heard 'round the world. The measure slashed property taxes by 57 percent, costing the state about $7 billion in annual revenue. Try as supply-siders might (and Arthur Laffer certainly has), property taxes do not strike at the margin; they have about as little effect on short-run economic incentives, in the supply-side sense, as any tax on the books.

The Reagan electoral landslide was a window of opportunity in the battle to reduce government, a window which has now been slammed shut (and perhaps broken in the closed position). The Administration was never serious about across-the-board spending cuts; Republican constituencies ("strong claimants") with bald-faced grabs for subsidies ("weak claims") ran the show from Day One. For all of David Stockman's political ineptitude in his candid talks with his *Washington Post* breakfast pal, he at least could call it straight. "The pigs were really feeding," the boy budget-cutter observed to Mr. Greider. And all the Reagan mandate threw back at them was more taxpayer slop.

Supply-siders have mistakenly (although, in a political world, understandably) tended to look at tax reduction as an economic all-purpose cleanser. In selling their soap as painless, costless, and even self-cleaning, and by crucifying those who have had the guts to tackle the more rugged clean-up jobs of ending inflation and scouring government pork barrels, the supply-siders run the risk not of burying the corpse of Keynes, but of joining him. □

[1]Basic Books, $17.95.

THE COERCIVE UTOPIANS: SOCIAL DECEPTION BY AMERICA'S POWER PLAYERS

Rael Jean Isaac and Erich Isaac/Regnery Gateway/$18.95

Robert James Bidinotto

Collectivism doesn't spring from the grass roots of society. Rather, it condenses within the philosophical smog layer enshrouding the universities, and descends upon society in a corrosive downpouring of proposals, experts, and organizations. Collectivism is the acid rain of academia.

But how, concretely, has an ivory-tower elite acquired practical power and influence? How have ideas supposedly alien to most Americans come to dominate their lives, seize their institutions, and undercut the vision of their nation's Founders?

In the 1970s, the graying remnants of the New Left realized that their overt hostility to America had spawned a conservative political backlash. So, like the British Fabians, our homegrown socialists began to soft-sell their program. "Economic democracy" became their new euphemism for "socialism." And they adopted a strategy of corroding, not confronting, the System, by penetrating influential institutions. By successfully permeating the hated "establishment," they have given new meaning to Pogo's lament that "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

The Coercive Utopians is an eye-opening guided tour of the world of intellectual and political manipulation. Through these painstakingly documented pages scurry the termites of pluralism: those who use the very virtues of American society—its tolerance, liberty, and generosity—to transform it into a collectivist "utopia."

The authors, Rael Jean Isaac and Erich Isaac, have already left their mark in magazine exposés of the "peace" movement and efforts by American churches on behalf of international terrorists. This book is their comprehensive survey of the methods and personnel of modern collectivist groups—a virtual *Who's Who* of the post-New-Left Left.

The Issacs are not conspiracy theorists. Their "coercive utopians" are diverse groups and individuals who think an "ideal" social order must be imposed by government coercion. Coercive utopianism is a loose intellectual coalition, not a monolithic plot—a many-headed hydra with a shared body of premises. The common neck connecting the many faces is the belief that American society "is deeply flawed, indeed hateful," the Isaacs write. "And if one has to identify the single aspect of American life they find most repugnant, it is our economic system."

There are the various denominations of the National Council of Churches, which—like their Catholic brethren who spout "liberation theology"—"sanctify revolution" by funding and backing Marxists and terrorists at home and abroad.

There are the environmental gurus—Amory Lovins, Barry Commoner, Jeremy Rifkin—who would coercively impose a "conserver society" and a "frugal or Spartan lifestyle."

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There are the "public interest" populists—mainly, the fleet of "consumer" groups launched by Ralph Nader—who would nationalize corporations and create an economic system "broken down into as many small parts as are economically possible."

There are the innumerable interlocking "think tanks"—the Institute for Policy Studies, the Fund for Peace, the Center for National Security Studies, the Center for Defense Information—which consistently whitewash Soviet aggression, denounce U.S. "imperialism," and aim to destroy our military defenses and intelligence agencies.

And there is the fraudulent "peace movement"—Women Strike for Peace, Mobilization for Survival, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Clergy and Laity Concerned—which promotes unilateral U.S. disarmament, since "the number one enemy of peace and justice in the world today is the United States."

The Isaacs show how these Trojan Horses interbreed. For instance, the Institute for Policy Studies has sired and fostered the Foundation for National Progress, the Cambridge Institute, and the Bay Area Institute of San Francisco. In turn, the Foundation for National Progress spawned *Mother Jones* magazine; the Cambridge Institute fathered the Center for the Study of Public Policy, the Center for Community Economic Development, and the Huron Institute; and the Bay Area Institute hatched the Pacific News Service—a left-wing propaganda source whose stories are dutifully carried by such media legitimati as the *Washington Post,* the *Boston Globe,* the *Chicago Tribune,* and the *Los Angeles Times.*

In similar fashion, the far-left Fund for Peace foaled a stable of groups advocating a U.S. foreign policy of wimpsmanship—including the Center for International Policy, the Center for National Security Studies, and the Center for Defense Information (Admiral Gene LaRocque's outfit). These specialize in rationalizing Soviet aggression and paralyzing American defense preparations. Prominent leaders of the Center for National Security Studies, for example, were on the speakers bureau formed by the publishers of *CounterSpy*—the anti-CIA periodical which printed names of American undercover agents abroad. Yet the Center has worked closely with the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and helped frame the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978.

The authors detail the penetration of government agencies by the "utopians" and how media pundits shield and promote them. Under Carter, hundreds of consumer, environmental, and public interest activists were given White House and sub-cabinet positions. Those who had been tossing rhetorical bombs at the System now found themselves at its helm. As for the media, the Isaacs' indictment of bias is devastating. Examples: A five-hour CBS documentary on national defense relied heavily on information supplied by the Center for Defense Information and other leftist outfits. ABC newsman Geraldo Rivera told *Playboy* how "we downplayed the whole incident" of Panamanian National Guard violence at the time of the Senate vote on the Canal treaties, "because I could defeat the very thing [passage of the treaty] that I wanted to achieve." Walter Cronkite told an interviewer, "There are always groups in Washington expressing views of alarm over the state of our defenses. We don't carry those stories. The story is that there are those who want to cut defense spending." And so on.

But in the chapter most likely to raise one's blood pressure, the Isaacs document how the U.S. taxpayer and capitalistic foundations have been financing their system's adversaries.

While the diversion of tax money to overt collectivists reached its hey-day under Jimmy Carter, entrenched leftist bureaucrats have made sure that the parasitism has continued under the Reagan Administration. How nice it is to read that, even after the "Reagan Revolution," federal departments continued to fund (among many others): a training institute which calls economic development "genocide"; a children's reading council whose story books reflect "the ongoing struggle between those few who control wealth and those many who are trying to share wealth"; and Environmental Action, publishers of *Ecotage,* a primer on using sabotage tactics against "enemies of the environment."

As for the subsidies from private foundations such as Ford and the Rockefeller Family Fund, the Isaacs remark that Lenin was imprecise in claiming that capitalists would "sell the rope with which they would be hung." Guilt-ridden Marxist heirs to capitalist fortunes are instead "donating the rope." "Ford," report the Isaacs, "has almost single-handedly bankrolled the public interest and environmental movements and has contributed substantially to the radical institutes." The Rockefeller Brothers Foundation likewise "donates heavily to environmental organizations, including the most militant of them." The Foundation has bestowed money, for instance, on the Bay Area Institute, an IPS offshoot, "for expansion of the Pacific News Service . . ."

Part of this funding is due to ignorance; some of it stems from a wish to be trendy; but much sprouts from ideological sympathies—and worse. One Rockefeller heir, asked how she'd pass her wealth to her children, answered: "I hope the social revolution will come soon and take away from us the necessity of having to deal with it." Echoed flour-fortune heir George Pillsbury: "I want to spend my money to remake the system that created the fortune."

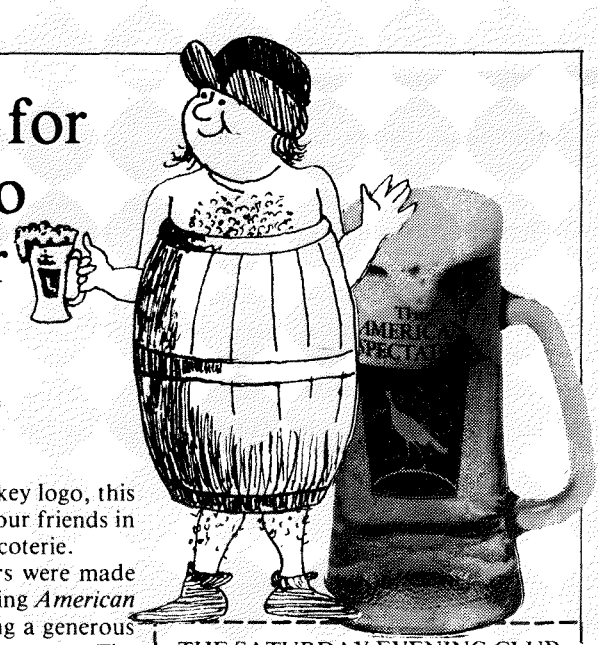
My only reservation regarding the book arises from its analysis of *why* the Left has met with so much success. The problem is implicit in the book's format. The authors apparently believe that it is enough to name names and quote quotes, counting on the notion that the public will automatically reject the views of collectivist utopians once these are made explicit. This implies that the public would find the views of the Left intolerable, if such views were openly admitted.

If anything, however, the Left has become more explicit than ever in its goals and aims—and the public has become far more tolerant of it all. The Democratic presidential candidates embraced much of the Left's leveling dogma, its rhetoric, and its proposals—all without public outrage or horror. George McGovern, buried in 1972 as too radical, has been disinterred as an "elder statesman" of his party a dozen years later. Mr. Reagan himself seems to feel obliged to pay reassuring obeisance, in word and policy, to "fairness"—another euphemism for redistributionism.

Politicians are barometers of public sentiment, not iconoclasts. When, in 1944, Friedrich von Hayek dedicated *The Road to Serfdom* "to the Socialists of all parties," he recognized a fact that seems to escape the Isaacs, and many conservatives, even today.

In trying to explain the Left's successes, the authors suggest that idealism itself may be to blame; that we must "return to the balky pragmatism for which Americans were famous." They seem to forget that America's Founders were sons of the Enlightenment—system-building theorists who united experience with principle. Realists, yes; but pragmatists? Hardly. The godfather of American political pragmatism in this century was Franklin Roosevelt, who prided himself in having no consistent or identifiable philosophy, save "whatever works." But how can "social engineering" be fought with pragmatic experimentation? Indeed,

Something for people who don't wear tee shirts.



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what's the difference? It's a matter the authors don't address.

To offer pragmatism to the American people as an intellectual antidote to the seductions of socialist "idealism," is to concede that socialism *is* idealistic, and that capitalism has no moral rationale. Such a concession, by capitalism's supposed defenders, is the chief reason for the success of the Left—particularly in attracting young people.

And it is that "idealism" which has increasingly immunized the Left from public criticism. No "exposé" is possible if the audience you wish to inform shares (or at least tolerates) your target's values. To work, an assault on activist "idealists" must start with a repudiation of their "ideal"—and it must offer a counter ideal. Capitalism is finished if, in the face of a moral challenge, all we can offer in reply is Murphy's Law.

No, this volume doesn't meet that challenge by explaining *why* the Left is evil or impractical. But despite the philosophical chasm in its thesis, the Isaacs' book is an invaluable study of *how* today's Left is undermining the free society. In this it succeeds brilliantly, and constitutes a reference no informed reader can afford to be without. *The Coercive Utopians* may not provide a philosophical defense against today's collectivist activists; but it does provide an abundance of startling facts for those willing and able to defend themselves philosophically. □

DEMOCRACY

Joan Didion/Simon and Schuster/$13.95

Thomas Mallon

As an epigraph to her first novel, *Run River,* Joan Didion, sixth-generation Californian, chose an observation from *Peck's 1837 New Guide to the West:* "The real Eldorado is still further on." That line says a lot about pioneering, an endeavor and state of mind that for a long time preoccupied Didion, who has registered suspicion of any code of conduct other than "wagon-train morality": "If we have been taught to keep our promises—if, in the simplest terms, our upbringing is good enough—we stay with the body, or have bad dreams." Conservatives may have been annoyed by her recent book on El Salvador, but irrespective of administration policy toward Central America, they would be hard put to read her twenty years' worth of books and not conclude that she is among the most fundamentally conservative writers in America.

Cant is cant, on whatever political wing it flies, and Didion's ear has in the past performed synesthetic miracles that let the reader hear the stench. In *Democracy,* her latest novel, she can still rise to the occasional smell. A put-upon ambassador is playing host to Harry Victor, a liberal Democratic congressman, during riots in Jakarta in 1969: "The ambassador was interviewed and expressed his conviction that the bombing of the embassy commissary was an isolated incident and did not reflect the mood of the country. Harry was interviewed and expressed his conviction that this isolated incident reflected only the normal turbulence of a nascent democracy."

It is a pleasure to find her still able to do this in *Democracy.* It is, however, less agreeable to realize that, having borrowed her title from Henry Adams, she has lifted almost everything else from her earlier novels. This book is principally about Inez Victor, Harry's wife, who has never gotten over Jack Lovett, an adventurer who spent much of the two decades before the fall of Saigon dealing in arms, currency, technology, and maybe drugs. "It was kind of the place to be" for Jack, who years before played regaling Othello to Inez's all-ears Desdemona, and whose right if shady stuff never lost its appeal for her during her long marriage to Harry, who can't even win something as worthless as the 1972 Democratic nomination. It's no wonder Inez (not to mention Didion) prefers Jack to Harry, who has all the depth of a press release. (He's even stuck her with a kid named Adlai.) You know she's finally going to bolt. She doesn't do it until one of her kids has run away from a methadone program to Saigon (in the spring of 1975) and her father has killed her sister, but she gets around to it, and when she does Jack is there to go with her.

Pardon me, miss, but haven't we met before?

Three times, in fact. Inez Victor has in the past gone by the names of Lily Knight McClellan, Maria Wyeth, and Charlotte Douglas. They were the heroines of Didion's first three novels, and they're still the heroine of this one. All four women have the same frayed psychic wiring. Inez has a "capacity for passive detachment" that proves to be "the essential mechanism for living a life in which the major cost was memory." A native of Hawaii, she "believed that grace would descend on those she loved and peace upon her household on the day she remembered the names of all ten Star Ferry boats that crossed between Hong Kong and Kowloon." What she remembers from the aforementioned Indonesian grenade-throwing is "the green lawn around the ambassador's bungalow at Puncak, the gardenia hedges." When she finally washes up in Kuala Lumpur tending to refugees (remembering Charlotte Douglas inoculating the population of Boca Grande?) and is pressed by Harry's adviser for a reason why, she writes back: *"Colors, moisture, heat, enough blue in the air. Four f---ing reasons."* Like Maria Wyeth of *Play It As It Lays,* she learns to ask why not instead of why. Like all the rest of the heroines she can be tough, both practically and morally, during certain emergencies, but she spends most of her life drifting in the wake of second-rate men and almost remembering something ineffable that somehow got lost.

Democracy is, by the author's admission, a failure. It got written when Didion detoured from the novel she originally intended to write about Inez's family in Hawaii. "Of the daughters I was at first more interested in Janet, who was the younger, than in Inez." No, this is not something Didion said in an interview. It's on page 25 of *Democracy,* which, in addition to its other problems, is a novel about novel-writing. "You see the shards of the novel I am no longer writing," the author tells us. "I lost patience with it. I lost nerve." This is fair enough, but why an author who has in the past written with ethical brilliance about cutting one's losses and burying one's dead chooses to advertise her failure in this awful old-hat *nouveau* way is mysterious and sad. Didion even decorates the failure with her own supposed presence in her characters' lives: "The first time I ever saw Jack Lovett was in a *Vogue* photographer's studio on West 40th Street, where he had come to see Inez. Under different auspices and to different ends Inez Victor and I were both working for *Vogue* that year, 1960. . . ." Didion was in fact working for *Vogue* then, but if she thinks it's somehow imaginatively interesting to claim that the demonstrably unreal Inez was as well, she's wrong. There's a sort of desperation to the device, and as this unholy marriage of author's biography and characters' non-lives proceeds, the reader winces and, finally, wearies. Two-thirds of the way through the book, Didion writes:

> I plan to address Jessie [Inez's daughter] presently, but I wanted to issue this warning first: like Jack Lovett and (as it turned out) Inez Victor, I no longer have time for the playing out.
>
> Call that a travel advisory.
>
> A narrative alert.

I'm not surprised that the blurb to *Democracy* gives no hint of its format. What surprises me is that Didion expects us to care about a story she apparently ceased to.

I have not been so disappointed by a novel in years—partly because as *Democracy* clanks along Didion keeps giving brief reminders of her exquisite gifts. Her dialogue is wonderful. After listening to Inez's sister Janet make conspicuously-consuming chat about childhood servants on a "CBS Reports" during the '72 campaign, Harry's adviser says: "Ask Mort how he thinks the governess from Neuilly tests out . . . Possibly Janet could make Mademoiselle available to do some coffees in West Virginia." A firm believer in the you-are-what-you-own theory of characterization, Didion stocks the Victors' Central Park West apartment with the ideological and careerist clutter of a lifetime:

> . . . the Canton jars packed with marking pencils, the stacks of *Le Monde* and *Foreign Affairs* and *The Harvard Business Review,* the legal pads, the several telephones, the framed snapshots of Harry Victor eating barbecue with Eleanor Roosevelt and of Harry Victor crossing a police line with Coretta King and of Harry Victor playing on the beach at Amagansett with Jessie and with Adlai and with Frances Landau's Russian wolfhound.

But some of the techniques that have served her so well in the past are worked too hard for the sake of lighting up these by-now-too-familiar faces: the litanies ("By which I mean to suggest" opening three paragraphs in a row); the caressing of scientific diction as an appalling antidote to the abstract ("Technical death would not occur until they had not one but three flat electroencephalograms, consecutive, spaced eight hours apart");

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the sentence fragments that used to be so arresting but now sometimes seem just a nervous refusal to finish a sentence:

See it this way.
See the sun rise that Wednesday morning in 1975 the way Jack Lovett saw it.
From the operations room at the Honolulu airport.
The warm rain down on the runways.
The smell of jet fuel.

One can sit down with the same syntax too many times, just as one can bump into the same heroine once too often. More than anything else *Democracy* suggests that it is time for Joan Didion to break camp, to realize that this particular vein is exhausted, to have the courage to pack up her enormous talents and once more, for the sake of imagination, head west. □

MY OTHER LONELINESS: LETTERS OF THOMAS WOLFE AND ALINE BERNSTEIN

Edited by Suzanne Stutman/University of North Carolina Press/$14.95

Paul Boytinck

Thomas Wolfe died at the age of 37. The surgeons who palliated his final moments bored into his skull, and the intercranial fluid danced, it is said, for the final time: arced 18 inches into the air, confirmed the worst fears of the surgeons (they found millions of tuberculi), and three days later he was dead of miliary tuberculosis of the brain.

He was a villainous stripling of 24 when he first met Mrs. Bernstein. She was a *saftig* matron of 44, and a successful theatrical designer when his own play *Welcome to Our City* was rejected by the then reigning lords of the theater. "I was in the real flower of my physical self, I was beautiful," she said later. "Please do not take it ill that I say this, it is not a boast, only a corroborative detail. He thought I was the most beautiful woman in the world." Their affair was begun on a boat, and it continued to have a storm-tossed element about it for years. Matters were not helped by mutual vows of fidelity and chastity, harshly exacted by either party to the affair. The word love did not come easily to his lips or his pen, and Aline Berstein, who undoubtedly loved him, suffered many a sophomoric yawp at his hands.

Here he is, almost 25, writing to his charmer from Baltimore:

I'm going down the bay to Norfolk on tonight's boat. Friend wanted reason—I had none, which he couldn't understand. Thank God, I'm alone. Back to the same of that summer's misery and enchantment when I was seventeen. By Bacchus, how the rubble gleams when touched by the lights of the carnival!

I may meet the Demon Drink Saturday in Richmond—he, afraid desperately of being alone, but understanding it in me. My dear, I have been gone a day, and I still love thee. Be thou ever—and ye will! Semper [in]fidelis. Tom.

A letter designed to warm a woman's heart. The lout is suggesting that she will always be unfaithful (the "in" of infidelis was lightly crossed out), and what is a poor woman to do? Listen:

The letter made me so happy, I have been walking on air all day. It made me happy all but the Latin Tag, with the prefix crossed out. But I know what I know, and that is how dearly I love you and how I am yours within myself. I wrote to you yesterday, to Asheville, and will telegraph tomorrow. We are loading up with more and more to do. It was a relief to know you are no longer with your wild companion.—You are my wild companion, and I hope you will always be so. The way I care for you is like a cube root. It just multiplies in every direction. God bless you. Aline.

He can never master that same effortless tone and convey that same affection because, I suspect, he did not have it in himself to do so. Young Thomas, it must be confessed on the strength of these letters, was somewhat of a bitch. "I never say a cruel thing to you in a letter," he asserts. He will say "nothing tawdry, nothing mean, nothing common," but sexual jealousy is eating at his vitals, and he boasts that his "powers of resistance" were never tried by a Belgian floozie, and he is free with casual fragments of pure kindness:

Goodbye, Jew. I remember with dull horror that it has been three weeks since I wrote you. Do you take this as an indication of my growing laxity? Oh but I speak to you presently and immanently as I write; the sea is too wide, too deep, too dark for me ever to reach you with my words. And I think as I go to bed here in ominous midnight that darkness drops, the revelry begins, the flashing lights blaze on the sky, and women, fatal, false, silken, soft-breasted cushion-bellied women awake to lust.

Aline was fond of food and a good cook and a big-breasted, lavishly hipped, delicately boned temptress and Thomas, initiated into her world, often asked other women, out of the blue, with a knowing air, if they were fond of cooking. He continues with the same inimitable charm:

Why I would go to China and ther'd be a day between our thoughts, but what's a day? And where dies faith? Where does the heart go rotten? When, when a woman lifts her skirt, behind the door; with sow grunts and belly burlesque. By God, I say that this is good, for poetry must live . . .

And more piffle of that kind. These remarks are addressed, not to a chippie of sweet sixteen, but to a matron of 44 whose pores breathe devotion, everlasting love and fidelity in a style of faultless simplicity. The correspondence therefore gives a strange and lopsided impression. He is wailing and gnashing his teeth, groaning about his quota of words per day, willing to wound and not afraid to strike, blunt and stupid (in his intelligent way) as a cracker. She is soft and devoted, emollient, not an irascible bone in her body. He is all angles and porcupine quills. She is all sweet reasonableness, and pneumatic patient flesh, all swansdown.

She protests, in a correspondence that nearly always breathes her devotion, that "With all your imagination, you do not seem to know how it is to be constantly vilified and beaten by a loved being," but Thomas does not take the sentiment to heart.

She is interested in him; he is interested in the world, and his own still negligible place in it. The famous *Oktoberfest* brawl is laid at her feet like a prize bone. He drank, he says, seven or eight liters of beer. The liters add up, he figures, to about a quart. In actual fact, the liters add up to a merry quantity of beer: perhaps two gallons. So tanked up, he naturally found all 6'6" of Thomas Wolfe engaged in a shoving match. The event graduated to general mayhem. In the resulting brawl his head was gashed, bloodied, shaved, stitched and eventually mended. He has gained, he reports to his cool mistress, "a criminal stubble, white scar and a grand unyielding love." She is not amused by the piratical catalogue, and sternly instructs him in the wisdom of this world. "The thing to do is to do it [write], and no one can do it but yourself. There are plenty of places in the world to get your head cracked and nose broken if that is what you are after."

The letters do not convince me that Wolfe loved his lady love. He was jealous, it is true, but jealous over a buxom and bonair woman of the world, and when that object crumbled, grew deaf, and became shrill, he turned into a stonecutter like his father before him, relentlessly lost in patient, heavy labor. The friendship he offered her after the affair had run its course was an amiable man's death sentence on an old love affair, and she failed to understand, much less accept, the older Wolfe's inexorable rejection. Some years later, when he was 30 and she 49, we find the following exchange:

I am cabling you today, for God's sake what is the matter with you. I am nearly mad with worry about you. If this silence of yours is only an idea, what is the idea. Surely nothing that you gain can be worth what you are inflicting on me. If I do not hear soon will try to come over to find you. Have you been consulting new acquaintances on how to treat old friends. I love you. Aline.

Obsessive love has made her imperious, demanding, frightful. Wolfe's response, in his notebooks, testifies to fury:

On Monday—July 28 I sent Aline Bernstein, my former mistress, a cablegram, in response to repeated letters and cablegrams of hers, in the last cablegram of which she said "Are you all right: Answer at once, otherwise I am sailing to find you at once"—I had not written this woman since 2 or 3 days after my arrival in France but in answer to these threatening letters & cables I sent the following message: "Aline Bernstein, Armonk, New York—Am Well living Montreux—Tom Wolfe"—I had no answer during interim but today Mr. Horace Coon (O quite by accident of course, showed up)—This woman, of course, is behind it: she wrecked me, maddened me, and betrayed my love constantly, but she will not leave me alone now. I hope the whore dies immediately and horribly, I would rejoice at news of this vile woman's death.

It is all very poignant, and it happens all the time, and the stars do not move one millimeter out of their orbits.

The letters do, however, convince me that Wolfe learned a literary lesson or two from his charming inamorata. He protests from time to time, almost with wonder, that she is the better writer of the two. That conclusion, in this exchange of letters, is undeniable. She is Molly Bloom. She is a woman. She moves along with a limpid, practiced ease which makes his own style appear like a laborious imposture. Slowly and reluctantly but wondering-

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ly, he struggled to learn these rhythms, these breathless devotions, this heart-rending simplicity. He never really quite caught the hang of it, but he got better at it as he went along:

Aline, you must hate death and lies and poison in the people about you, and you must love life. You are beautiful and you love life more than anyone I have ever known. You are the most beautiful and glorious person I have ever known, and this is the person that must now speak, and act, and live. I have loved you and given the best years of my life to you—do not wantonly and cruelly try to destroy me now: no one can hurt me in myself. I am now good and strong, but they can hurt me by attacking me through something outside of me in which my love is fixed—this is the cheap little New York-gossip method, but it is not your method because you are a great woman. Aline, be my friend, as I am yours; love me dearly as I love you; be sane and honest and strong, as I have tried to make myself alone in exile; and be beautiful and lovely and good as you alone on this whole earth can be. Aline, I have fought it out in blood and agony and loneliness and exile—and I am a young man, and if I do not work and create now, I will die. Aline, surely you, with your great wisdom, talent, beauty, and character can be as wise as I am about it—I need your help, and I need your friendship, and I need your love and belief—but the time of madness, darkness, passion is over, we can never relive that, we can never live through it again. Can you love me as I love you?—I cannot tell you how I love but I know that the thought and meaning of you is like a bullet through my brain. The sneering life-hating part of the earth, the desolate and empty fools, deny and hate the possibility of such love, but desperse [sic] them and tell them that they lie—I will love you, by God, as long as I live, and it will never change. But do not misunderstand me, or try to break me with threats, or make me begin something that is ended—that is the way of madness and death, I will never yield, I will endure loneliness and physical death before I do.

There is here, as often in Wolfe, an excess of sound and fury—the epistolary equivalent of the one part fiction, ten parts of bastard blank-verse ecstasy Bernard DeVoto jeered at in Wolfe's novels—but there are unanswered questions, mysteries, at the heart of this affair. There are, perhaps, more mysteries in Aline Bernstein than we will ever know. Of her love and affection there is absolutely no doubt whatever. He began as her wild companion and, God knows, no man ever worked harder to transform an old love affair into a current friendship with as little success. There is, finally, a fragment from him to her which makes for curious reading. He has become the writer hunting for material, imperious in his own right.

He wants to know what happens inside her head when she designs, and he wants her to tell him about the process as vividly and simply as she can. He wants to know what objects of her designer's trade she worked with, and why Hamlet should wear this kind of costume and Mercutio that. He wants to know about her time in childbirth, when she had a hard time of it and repeated the phrase "Who would fardels bear." He wants her to describe the sensation of sexual intercourse and female orgasm as well as she can. He wants to know the approximate number of men she has slept with. He wants to know her sexual fantasies. "You told me that George Bellows was your lover—for how long was he your lover? Why did he stop being your lover? Why did you love him to begin with? Did you feel grief when he died? What sort of man was he? Tell me why you thought he died because he could not be a great artist. Give me some idea of it. Why did you tell me the name of George Bellows and not the name of any other lovers. Was it because he was the most celebrated man who had ever been your lover? When you loved him were you promiscuous? Was he promiscuous? Were you faithful to each other?"

It makes for curious reading, this cold hunt for the truth from a woman he had once loved. The fragment, we are told, was never mailed, but I am not so certain. The truth does not always sing in a birdcage for the ease of mortal man. Scholars speculate at their peril, but I am willing to bet that, in one way or another, through print or words, or rapid deductions from the flutter of an eye, Wolfe got the answers he was after. He was, after all, a working novelist; and as Anthony Burgess once wrote, himself a member of the tribe: "A novelist was not, of course, a gentleman."

A footnote. Thomas Wolfe died in 1938, some days before his 38th birthday. Aline Bernstein died in 1955 at the age of 74. She was not allowed to see Wolfe on his deathbed for fear that it would upset his mother, Mrs. Wolfe, and so upset the patient. Such is life, as Ned Kelly reportedly said on the gallows. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 7)

tion with another oppressed group. He also states that "the recriminations have been rancorous." On the contrary, the Jewish establishment has kept a remarkably cool head in dealing with Jackson's anti-Semitic slurs. In fact, Tucker makes glaring omissions in regard to Jackson's slurs and to his colleague Louis Farrakhan's praise for Hitler. This information would blow holes in Tucker's contrived and murky thesis.

Tucker stresses over and over again in his article the mythology that surrounds black people. Let him bear in mind the many mythologies that have also enveloped another people, a people that lately seems to be drawing more than their fair share of slander and ill will—from all quarters.

—Robin Vigfusson
Nutley, New Jersey

William Tucker replies:
This and other letters charge that my article was too much of an apology for Jackson, and did not go far enough in condemning his anti-Semitism.

It is not my point to fix blame here. The point of my article was simply to dispel the myth that all black voters that turned out for Jackson in the primaries would be happily incorporated into a united Democratic party next fall. This may seem obvious now, but at the time Dan Rather was still cheerily asking Walter Mondale if he was going to select Jackson for his Vice President.

My point was that the Democrats' divide-and-conquer strategy is coming apart at the seams, precisely because the more the Democrats try to divide people, the more divisive they become.

The Republican strategy of finding unifying issues seems far better.

NATO and the World

In his article, "Conservative Critics of NATO" (*TAS*, June 1984), Owen Harries gives an accurate account and perceptive critique of the views of Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, and Henry Kissinger on what everyone agrees is "the crisis in NATO." In addition, he presents his own prescription for "reinvigorating NATO" by strengthening its "politics" and expanding it to incorporate a "Pacific Community." Having carefully followed the debate over the years, I remain dissatisfied. However, the requirements of epistolary compression compel me to state my position in summary form.

The analyses suffer from a serious common defect. Throughout, NATO is treated as an "alliance" between the U.S. and Western Europe. An *alliance* assumes mutual obligations and undertakings among its members. But NATO was not such at its inception and is not such to this day. NATO was and remains a *unilateral* guarantee by the U.S. of the defense of Europe against Soviet aggression without any reciprocal commitment by Europe to defend U.S. or Western security interests outside of Europe. This arrangement was unavoidable in the aftermath of World War II but, after Europe completed its recovery with generous American assistance, it began to lose all sense. It created a chronic and parochial dependency on the part of Western Europe with a corresponding loss of will to provide adequately for its own defense not only in Europe but also in other areas vital to Europe's survival (such as the Gulf today). Worse still, the very dependency gave rise to increasing anti-Americanism in Europe and, in the U.S., to growing resentment against the failure of Europe to carry its fair share of the burden of its own defense *and* in maintaining *world* peace threatened by Soviet global expansionism.

This formulation of the problem as requiring a global perspective leads me to the conclusion that NATO must either be transformed into a true alliance with reciprocal global obligations—or it should be dissolved. This will leave Europe to provide for its own defense. For this, it has adequate human and material resources. If the spiritual resources and will are lacking, then, in a showdown, nothing we can do will help anyway (on this point, I am in agreement with Kristol). It is self-deception to believe that half-way measures or cosmetic devices will suffice or that a decision can be long delayed.

Within this perspective (for instance), the question of American forces and commitment in the defense of Europe would be linked with certain Western European forces being made available for the global defense of the Alliance. This in turn presupposes that the Alliance will coordinate a global geopolitical strategy, instead of constantly working at cross-purposes (as, say, in Central America).

The Alliance may also be further expanded to incorporate a "Pacific Community," as proposed by Mr. Harries, as well as regional groups in the Western Hemisphere, the Middle East, and Africa. As for China, while the West has apparently lost the chance (which existed briefly) for a strategic relationship, China will nevertheless objectively be a force for world peace since it must continue to oppose Soviet encirclement and its vast modernization program depends on close economic ties with the West into the next century (incidentally, creating an alternative model for the Third World).

This global perspective is the optimal answer to Soviet global expansionism. But, if it is unacceptable to Western Europe, then the U.S. has no choice but to proceed on its own to seek a "unilateral globalism" (Kristol).

—Elias M. Schwarzbart
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New York, New York

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THE TALKIES

LET THEM COME

by Roger Kaplan

Why do so many people, from so many different distant lands, come to the United States of America? They come legally and illegally, by hook and by crook, they come even when they have only the vaguest idea of how they will earn a living. The story of their new life, and of the innumerable hardships they have to surmount, is one of the central stories of American history. It is a story relived in every generation by millions. And in every generation, millions come here for two intertwined reasons. They come to America because the air is filled with liberty and the streets are paved with gold.

Our forefathers well understood the profound connections between economic and political freedoms. They expressed them in some of the most elegant statements of political philosophy in Western literature. And they expressed their understanding simply by working and thriving, by building a continental empire, a democracy that spanned the earth's two greatest oceans, a land of refuge and hope and progress. Our America remains a land of plenty not only because of its fortunate geography, but principally because we have maintained the conditions that have given generation after generation of emigrants from less happy places reasons for believing that here they will have a chance.

Unfortunately, the wisdom of our forefathers is not to be found in our present immigration policy. A strange distinction between "economic" and "political" refugees has been advanced in recent years: Quotas for national groups can be overcome by individuals if they can demonstrate they are "political" refugees, rather than, for example, merely shoeless peons. The distinction in many cases is impossible to make, and it invariably leads to exclusions that are capricious, arbitrary, and cruel.

Consider in this context two recent films dealing with immigration. *Moscow on the Hudson* is a marvelously executed, poignant, and charming comedy about a Russian circus saxophonist. Vladimir Ivanoff (Robin Williams) knows very well that life in the Soviet Union is atrocious, politically speaking, but he is more concerned, truth to tell, about the scarcity of such items as toilet paper. His circus visits New York City under KGB escort. As a matter of fact, he is reluctantly spying on his friend, the starring clown (Elyia Baskin), who, as the KGB goons know, wants to defect. But the clown loses his nerve at the last minute, whereas Vladimir, astonished by the designer jeans in Bloomingdale's and stunned by the beauty of a perfume salesgirl (Maria Conchita Alonso), makes a successful run for it. The cops and a security guard, played by Cleavant Derricks, protect him from his babysitters and Derricks, full of sympathy ("I'm a refugee from Alabama"), gives him his first American couch to sleep on, with his family in Harlem. A clever Cuban-American lawyer, Alfonso Rey, himself a refugee from Castro, quickly gets Vladimir his political defector status, work papers, and his first job as a busboy. Life is hard and confusing in New York and Vladimir is often sad and homesick, but the future is in front of him, he has a girlfriend and, who knows, he may someday play the sax like his jazz idols.

Moscow on the Hudson is a film whose dominant note is hope, with counterpoints of sorrow. In Gregory Nava's quite different film, *El Norte,* the continuing nightmare is bearable only because the principal character's moral courage prevents him from giving up his dream of a better life, despite the blows that are struck against him. The story is about two adolescents, Enrique and his sister Rosa (David Villalpando and Zaide Silvia Gutierrez), who flee their Indian village in the mountains of Guatemala. Soldiers had murdered their parents because their laborer father was trying to break out of peonage. For son and daughter, the alternative to going north is death; they know this as well as anyone can, but they also think that in "el norte" they will find all the things they've seen in back issues of *Good Housekeeping*. Their first "coyote" (a Tijuana Mexican specializing in getting illegal immigrants over the border) tries to rob them. They make it to Los Angeles where for a brief time every one of their dreams seems possible, until they discover the meaning of their illegal status. The story ends grimly, Rosa dying in a hospital and Enrique selling his arms as a day laborer.

It is no doubt better to be a Russian emigre in New York than an illegal Guatemalan in Los Angeles. But it is better to be an illegal Guatemalan in Los Angeles than a dead Guatemalan in Guatemala. The question is, as Elliott Abrams, assistant secretary of state for human rights, is wont to say: "What do you do?" I honestly do not know what the answer is, but what passes for official policy in this country at the present is ludicrous, Simpson-Mazzoli notwithstanding.

Both of these films make it very clear that the immigrant's lot is very tough. Just so: Our literature and cinema are full of the toil and trouble of making a new life in our land of bountiful and boundless freedom—from Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* to the epic movies of Jan Troll (about the Swedish emigration to the Middle West) or Elia Kazan (about the Greeks). Good immigration movies have never sought to deny that the temptations and difficulties of starting from scratch are real.

Paul Mazursky, who directed *Moscow on the Hudson,* shows us a New York which is grubby, often bitter and uncaring. Gregory Nava, in *El Norte,* gives us a Los Angeles with exploitative day-labor bosses and U.S. citizens desperate enough for work to denounce their fellow workers to "la migra" (the immigration authorities) in order to get their jobs.

Both films also illustrate the connections between economic and political freedom. Vladimir has a friend in Moscow who is sent to a psychiatric ward for protesting the rape of Afghanistan: He learns this while waiting in line for a few rolls of coveted toilet paper. The first time he goes shopping in a grocery store in New York, the amount and varieties of coffee available so astonish him that he faints (to be sure, he is suffering from accumulated tensions). In *El Norte,* the dream of a better life, with cars and flush toilets (we'd be wise not to smirk at the frequent obsession with basic sanitation), is directly associated by the Indians with the perception that the Creoles never will allow them to buy the land they work on.

Inevitably, films of this sort do not portray America in a consistently flattering light, even while they underline the country's fabulous attractiveness to the immigrants. The immigrants, especially the illegals from Central America, are at the bottom of the economic ladder; they encounter for the most part hard people with overwhelming problems of their own. They are easy marks for sharks of all kinds. It would be foolish and dishonest to pretend that things are otherwise. What we should understand, in any event, is that there is room in our land for people who want to do well for themselves. Even without a wide-open-doors policy, we ought to be able to appreciate this and take advantage of it. □

Roger Kaplan is a New York writer and reviewer. Resuming this column next month will be John Podhoretz, critic-at-large for the Washington Times.

COMING NEXT MONTH

Excellence in Education: The First Year

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CURRENT WISDOM

Polish Studies Center Newsletter (Indiana University)

Prof. Elizabeth Steiner reveals the flumdiddle that can be created when feminism is combined with a leading school of education and a flourishing Polish Studies Center:

Professor Elizabeth Steiner of the Indiana University School of Education will spend a month at Warsaw University on the short-term Indiana/Warsaw Exchange. She has written the following description of the research she will be pursuing: "Past research on female professors has centered on discrimination, and techniques (such as the survey) were used limiting attention to that which could be kept general enough and demonstrable enough to be counted. I am conducting a study which centers on the female professional workspace. Workspace rather than workplace is the focus, since persons who are in the same place of work have not only different physical workspace, but also different psychical workspace (meaning and affect) as well as social workspace (positioning relative to others). Also, I am using techniques that permit attention to the quality of the female professorial workspace. Through unstructured interviewing and still photography, I am obtaining words and images to disclose the pervasive features of the female professorial workspace.

"The study is international in scope and so I am privileged to be a participant in the Warsaw Exchange so that I can interview female professors in Poland. I hope to study the female professorial workspace not only at Warsaw University but also at Jagiellonski, Adam Mickiewicz, Boleslawa Bieruta, Marii Curie-Sklodowskiej, and Torun Universities. I look forward to my visiting professorship during the month of May."

[February-April 1984]

The Nation

Alexander Cockburn (pronounced ko͞-burn) describes the diabolical effects of java or charley on the otherwise serene features of Mr. Abe Rosenthal, editor of the *Times* of New York:

A friend described having breakfast with Rosenthal a while ago. They were munching along amiably when suddenly Rosenthal lowered his face toward his coffee cup until only the top of his head was visible. Then up came the face again, beginning to rant about some assault on his character supposedly promulgated in my friend's periodical. It was, my friend said, to gaze into the eyes of madness.

[April 28, 1984]

New York Times

Dr. William L. Shirer demonstrates that a lot of Scotch has passed over the esophagus since he observed Nazis marching into old Austria, and that intellectual fashions have changed as has the testosterone level in this old mountebank:

At a recent talk at the National Portrait Gallery . . . William L. Shirer stirred up a bit of a fuss.

Mr. Shirer, the author of "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," was participating in the "Living Portrait" lectures, a series in which noted people discuss their own careers and which has attracted Robert Moses, Jesse Owens, Lee Strasberg, Karl Menninger and I.B. Singer. . . .

Mr. Shirer said the United States invasion of Grenada reminded him of the way the Nazis marched into Austria to, as the Germans said, "prevent chaos." Mr. Shirer hastened to say he was not comparing President Reagan with Hitler but added, "I wonder if it's history repeating itself."

[May 15, 1984]

San Francisco Chronicle

A new day dawns in law enforcement as the New Age good government types begin recruiting a special kind of cop from a special kind of bar:

San Francisco Sheriff Mike Hennessey smiled slightly yesterday afternoon as he received the crowd that had come to Chaps, the city's most popular gay leather bar, to hear the sheriff give a recruitment pitch.

"A lot of people have come out for this, and a lot of them are already in uniform," Hennessey said.

The locale was not inappropriate for the department's current drive for applicants; Chaps draws the kind of patrons who know a lot about punishment, if not about crime. The 150 men who came to hear Hennessey chuckled often about the irony of drawing new deputies from among men who may have already seen their fair share of uniforms, restraints and dungeons.

"It's good, steady work," said Roller, 37, a chauffeur who recently moved to San Francisco from Los Angeles. "Besides, I like being around men in uniforms."

The gay deputies at the 11th Street bar yesterday bore such remarks with manly restraint, saying that this recruitment drive is no more offbeat than efforts to put Asians, blacks, Latinos and women onto the new Civil Service list being drawn up for the Sheriff's Department.

"The city government should reflect the people who make up the city," said Sergeant John Abney, a seven-year department veteran. "And we certainly are a substantial portion of the city. This bar was the place that invited us and we're going to take advantage of it."

[March 12, 1984]

New York Daily News

A young iconoclast communicates with one of the intellectual giants of our age, Dr. Ann Landers:

Dear Ann: I sympathize with "Nameless in Whittier," the battered husband. My father, a kind and sensitive man, has been a battered husband for 15 years so I know that scene inside out.

My mother flies off the handle for the silliest reasons. When she gets upset she beats on him with her fists and claws him with her nails. Once she threw a plate of spaghetti in his face. At other times, especially in front of relatives and acquaintances, Mom is the most gentle and loving person in the world. . . .

Battered husbands have a harder time than battered wives because people think they are wimps. If they hit back they are in worse trouble and can be sued for assault and battery.

[February 8, 1984]

San Diego Union

In the great state of California the magisterial 4th District Court of Appeals demonstrates that the judicial tradition that gave us *Marbury* v. *Madison* has moved on to finer distinctions:

Judge Jack Levitt should not have gotten so wrapped up in the Case of the Troubling Turban.

In a unanimous opinion that quoted the Roman statesman Cicero and referred to State Chief Justice Rose Bird being sworn in "while attractively attired in a pantsuit," the 4th District Court of Appeals ruled that J. Kenneth Jensen can practice in Levitt's courtroom without explaining why he wears a turban.

In striking down the judge's "no-turban-without-explanation edict," the appellate court likened Levitt's policy to a "courtroom inquisition" and called it "an invasion of privacy."

Justice Edward Butler wrote that any turbaned attorney wishing to practice before Levitt would be compelled "to disclose religious beliefs, cranial disfigurement or other reasons for turban-wearing for Judge Levitt's review. To require a lawyer to disclose religious beliefs as a condition to appear before a judge returns us to those troubled times our ancestors fled in their search for freedom from religious oppression."

[March 17, 1984]

National Catholic Reporter

During a review of a book on the Nicaraguan revolution, spellbinding theater from another pious Christian of the New Age, to wit: Miss Blase Benpane, former Maryknollian:

And such mediocre minds are all over the place—in the church, in the U.S. government and in the counterrevolutionaries of the world. How touching it is to see the bloodsoaked president of the United States accuse the Nicaraguans of insulting the Pope!

It was great to be in the seminary with you, d'Escoto. I will not forget when we told you to call the sheets "linens" because we did not like the sound of the way you said "sheets."

And thanks for coming to my perch at the Americana Hotel when I was expelled from Guatemala. You were present and concerned. And I must tell you how proud I was of you on that day in 1977 when you told me you were a Sandinista.

And what a vision you were, Fernando Cardenal, in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, at the commemoration of the birth of your country's hero, Carlos Fonseca Amador. In your sombrero with the youth of Nicaragua as your responsibility, you represent to me the very best of Jesuit and priestly formation.

Yes, Ernesto, I hear you, "There's no incompatibility between Christianity and Marxism. They aren't the same thing—they're different—but they're not incompatible. What Christ did was to present us with the goals of social change, the goals of perfect humanity, which we are to co-create with him. These goals are a community of brothers and sisters, and love."

This book is a great contribution to the United States. If this sick empire listens to these holy men, it, too, might be saved; it, too, might learn of conscience and *epikeia*.

May there be many Nicaraguas!

No Pasaran!

[January 20, 1984]

Joplin Globe

Hard-headed Liberals take on the sex maniacs of Drake University's Student Activities Board, as reported from the American steppe:

An upcoming "Erotic Film Festival" at Drake University has drawn protests from women and ministers, who are fighting back with a sexually explicit triple-feature of their own.

The difference, according to a sponsor of the rival films, is that their films are not demeaning to women.

When the curtain rises on the film "Deep Throat" tonight at the Drake Student Activities Board's annual festival, three student groups will be showing alternative fare supplied by Planned Parenthood: films showing heterosexual and homosexual lovemaking.

The alternative program was planned "instead of a combative response, such as picketing" said Tracy Baim, co-chairwoman of the Drake Association for Women Students.

[March 2, 1984]

Columbia Spectator

The achievements of Columbia University's thought police as reported in the student newspaper of that same freedom-loving institution:

Sponsors for next fall's freshman orientation program have been screened so that students who do not feel comfortable with gays do not work at gay-sponsored events.

According to Leora Neter, College assistant dean of students, applications for sponsors' positions were not rejected solely on the basis of "homophobic attitudes," but at most interviews students were asked how they would feel working at events run by gay students.

Just because someone feels uncomfortable with gays "doesn't necessarily mean he [or she] would be a bad sponsor," Neter said.

Neter said that she is not sure if homophobic attitudes, or, fear of gays, can be detected in interviews. "People have a sense of what's being looked for," she said. "In an interview, one can only get a glimpse of these attitudes."

[April 4, 1984]

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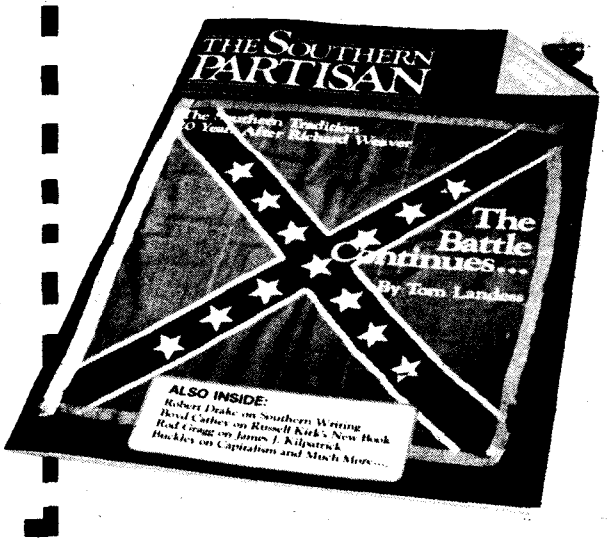

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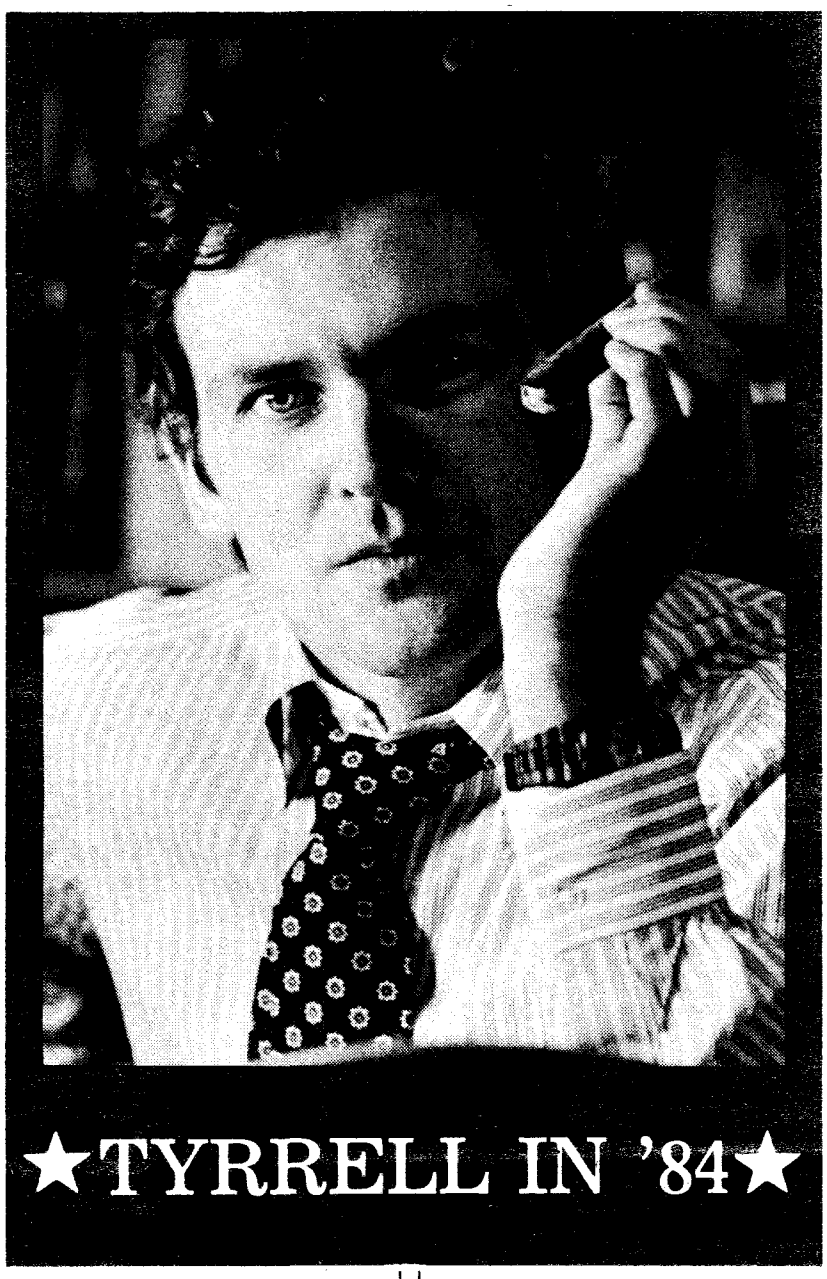

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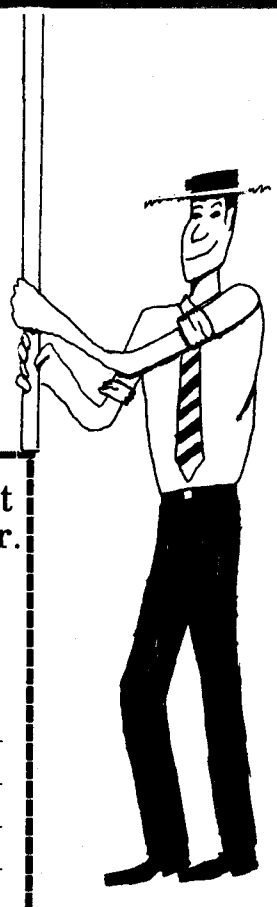

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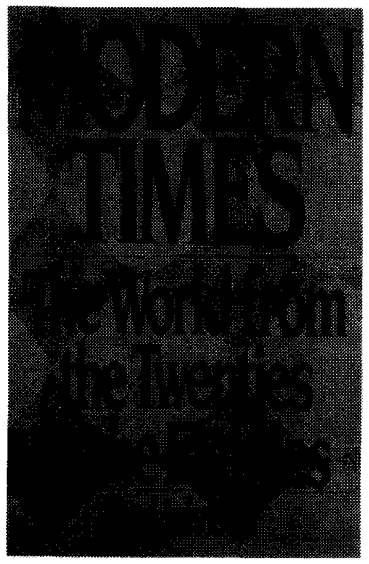

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Fill in the blanks with the people Paul Johnson is referring to:

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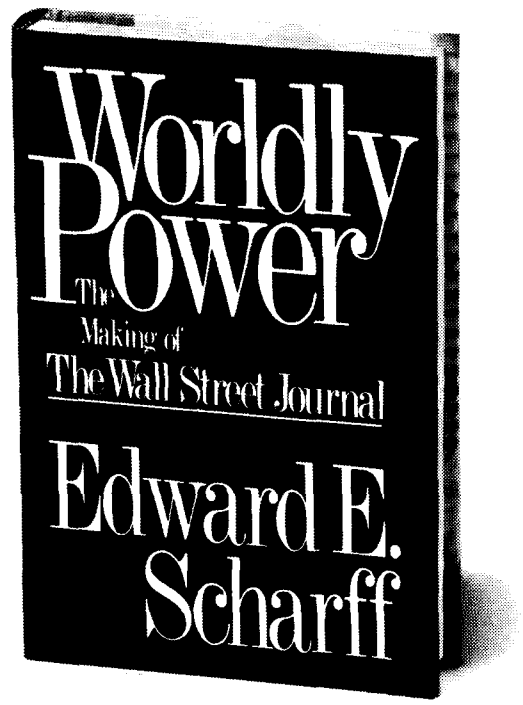

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Volume 19 Number 7, July 1986

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